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Sudan

An emergency cabinet meeting called by Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi decided to rescind the price increases announced 26 December but keep intact the promised wage raises, SUNA announced.

The cabinet said the government would seek "real taxes" to cover the financing of the wage raises.

The moves follow 3 days of "mass demonstrations" and strikes which left government offices "deserted," public transport at a "stand-still," and Omdurman radio off the air, according to SUNA, which only continued to operate with volunteer workers.

The airport closed for a second day, and all telex and telephone communication with the country was cut.

Eyewitnesses cited by SUNA said police fired in the air to disperse crowds in Khartoum who did not give up the demonstrations after the cabinet decision was announced.

In a related development, the information minister announced that Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi's Ummah Party and the Militant National Islamic Front Party will form a new coalition government following the withdrawal of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) from the government.

The DUP earlier announced its pullout from the government of national accord and called for a national reconciliation government that would implement the DUP-/SPLA peace initiative signed recently.

Reaction to Plane Crash Investigation

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said the news that the Pan Am jet that crashed over Scotland was sabotaged was "not surprising," Jerusalem radio reported.

He said he does not know who is responsible for the attack, but asserted that it was a terrorist organization with "experience in this field," recalling that the PLO was the first organization to attack civilian aviation.

The Fatah Revolutionary Organization issued a statement extending condolences to the families of the victims of the plane crash and expressing "deep sorrow over this catastrophe," the Lebanese paper Al-NAHAR reported.

In an editorial published before the crash investigation results were announced, the Jerusalem paper AL-FAJR affirmed "absolute condemnation" of all forms of terrorism and condemned anyone "falsely assuming" the Palestinian name who may have been responsible for the crash.

Lebanon

Hostages Released—Two French girls who have been held for over a year by the Fatah Revolutionary Council in Lebanon have arrived in Benghazi, Libya, Paris radio announced.

The girls' release, promised for 25 December, was delayed when the group's leader, Sabri al-Banna, also known as Abu Nidal, decided to see them off personally, the clandestine Voice of the Mountain reported.

Israeli Attack—IDF assault helicopters attacked the Al-Sultaniyah township north of the security strip in Lebanon 29 October, wounding four Amal members, Voice of the Mountain reported.

The target was the site from which a Palestinian Liberation Front squad set out to attack Israel 28 December, IDF radio noted.

The three Palestian "terrorists" were killed when they tried to infiltrate Israel, Jerusalem radio reported.

Israel

Foreign Relations—Foreign Minister Moshe Arens will meet his Egyptian counterpart to discuss bilateral relations when the two are in Paris for the UN conference on chemical warfare, HA'ARETZ disclosed.

Arens would also like to meet Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, and arrangements for such a meeting are being made.

Violence in Territories—Two Arabs were killed and three were wounded in clashes with security forces in the territories, Jerusalem radio reported.

The curfew imposed 28 December on several camps in the Gaza Strip was lifted.

Palestinian Affairs

PFLP Secretary General George Habash and DFLP Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah issued a joint communique in Damascus renewing their criticism of PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's recognition of Israel, Voice of the Mountain reported.

The communique affirmed that 'Arafat's statements in Geneva do not conform with the PNC resolutions made in Algiers and do not represent the PLO's "official policy."

The communique denounced the U.S. Administration for imposing pressure on the PLO leadership.

Meanwhile, Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh called differences with the PFLP a matter of "interpretations," and expressed confidence that they can be worked out, the JORDAN TIMES reported.

He also said the PLO is hoping for a dialogue with Syria.

Rabbuh, who headed the PLO delegation to the talks with the United States in Tunis, said the U.S. decision to meet the PLO does not satisfy the conditions for peace in the Middle East, the paper noted.

He said the U.S. Administration must "choose between the international and Israeli positions" on how to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In other developments, the Government of Saudi Arabia announced that as of 1 January it will regard the PLO office in Riyadh as the Embassy of Palestine, SPA reported.

Inter-Arab Affairs

A summit of all Arab states, including Egypt, will be held "soon" in Amman, AL-ITTIHAD disclosed.

Egypt's return to the Arab League will be approved "without substantial problems," despite possible Libyan reservations, the paper noted, and the establishment of an Arab economic grouping similar to the EEC will have a "significant place" on the agenda.

Meetings between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and between Al-Asad and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn are planned.

Iran-Syria

Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has met several Iranian leaders in Tehran to discuss developments in the Gulf and the Palestinian issue, Damascus radio reported.

According to IRNA, Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani expressed Iran's readiness to "strengthen resistance forces fighting the Zionist regime and the U.S."

Afghanistan

New Party Planned—The PDPA will be replaced by a nationalist and democratic party that will not be socialist, according to a senior government official "close" to Najibullah, AFP reported.

The official said the name of the party will be changed and its platform will be rewritten, with new economic policies and "no reference to Leninisim."

Continued Fighting—Kabul was shelled for the second time in 2 days and attacks were also launched on Herat, Konduz, and cities in Paktia Province, killing 28 people, Moscow radio reported.

Mujahidin forces killed 46 government troops and destroyed 4 helicopters in a rocket attack on a base in Baghlan Province, AFP noted.

Mujahidin Statement—No effort will be spared to drive the "invaders" out of Afghanistan and the resistance will not accept "any kind of cease-fire," according to a joint statement issued by the resistance groups based in Iran and Pakistan, Tehran radio reported.

The statement also condemned as a "colonialist conspiracy" the plan to bring UN forces into Afghanistan and disarm the nation.

Palestinian Affairs

WAKH Reports 'Arafat Baghdad News Conference

JN2712185288 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1720 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 27 Dec (WAKH)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has condemned the initiative announced by Yitzhaq Shamir, the Zionist entity's prime minister, on the Palestine question.

'Arafat described the language used by Shamir as impudence and as an unsalable commodity. The Palestinian leader stressed that Shamir cannot make the monkey look like a bride.

At a news conference held here today and attended by the correspondents of Arab and foreign news agencies, 'Arafat said: Shamir must understand that he cannot beautify the Camp David accords or autonomy.

'Arafat ridiculed the language used by Shamir on the launching of self-rule and referred to the statements made by the Israeli prime minister on the need to hold direct negotiations with a Palestinian-Jordanian delegation under the supervision of the two superpowers on the establishment of autonomy.

'Arafat added that Shamir seeks to obtain an international stamp of approval to enable him to condescend to grant us autonomy, and went on to say: And I say here to Shamir that there are no longer any international or regional parties that are ready to listen to this impudence.

The Palestinian leader announced that the resolutions adopted by the PLO Executive Committee, which concluded its meetings Sunday night, focused on the escalation of the uprising inside the occupied territories and the Palestinian people's steadfastness in the face of the occupation and in southern Lebanon to confront the new conspiracy being hatched by the Zionist enemy.

He added that the resolutions adopted by the committee also centered on the diplomatic peace moves.

Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] denounced the means of deception that used to be utilized by Israeli Labor Party Leader Shim'on Peres as well as his allegations regarding his acceptance of the international conference idea.

'Arafat said that the recent Labor-Likud agreement has exposed the face of Peres which he used to deceive some European official quarters and parties.

'Arafat indicated that the Israeli program, which contains 34 articles and according to which the new government was formed, rejects the international conference, negotiations with the PLO, and the independent Palestinian state.

'Arafat cautioned against the possibility of a re-eruption of fighting in southern Lebanon and said the PLO Executive Committee has studied in detail the information that has reached it regarding the war scenario prepared for southern Lebanon.

The Palestinian leader added that it is regrettable that this war scenario was prepared in cooperation between Israel and some agent and suspect Arab forces in our region.

However, he declined to provide further information on the identity of these forces and only said he expects that the attacks against Palestinian camps in southern Lebanon will take place before the end of U.S. President Reagan's term in office next month or in the beginning of the term of new President Bush in order to place new political givens before Bush.

Abu 'Ammar emphasized that this operation will seek to allow Israel to overcome its impasse, which was brought about by the uprising through exporting sectarian [word indistinct].

'Arafat announced that the PLO Executive Committee, together with the Palestinian leadership, will hold a meeting within 10 days to follow up a number of issues that are under discussion regarding the establishment of the constitutional institutions of the Palestinian state.

'Arafat said that a subcommittee was formed within the Executive Committee whose task is to follow up the issue of the formation of the Palestinian government and to ensure contacts with the kinfolk in the occupied territory to implement the recent PNC resolutions.

'Arafat added that the subcommittee will present the results of its work to the Executive Committee within a month.

After endorsing the results, the Executive Committee will call on the Palestinian Central Council to hold a meeting to take decisions accordingly.

'Arafat denied that the American side made specific demands to the PLO delegation in the first round of dialogue. He added that all that has been published to this effect is incorrect.

He said that during the meeting each side presented to the other its viewpoint regarding a number of issues.

Abu 'Ammar stressed that nothing can take place in the region without the approval of the United States in its capacity as one of the two superpowers and a permanent member of the Security Council.

He said: We are not dreamers. And we are not facing Israel but this unlimited support Israel is receiving from the American strategic ally on all levels.

The PLO leader expects the second round of the Palestinian-American dialogue to be held before the end of President Reagan's term or at the beginning of President George Bush's term.

He said: We are now preparing an agenda, and they are preparing an agenda. The two sides will agree on one agenda to embark on the second round of dialogue.

Abu 'Ammar did not rule out promoting the level of presentation in the Palestinian-American dialogue. He said that this depends on the circumstances under which the talks will be held.

'Arafat reiterated the call for convening an urgent Arab summit to confront the dangers facing the Arab nation.

He said: We have been calling for an Arab summit since the Al-'Aqabah tripartite summit with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Jordanian monarch King Husayn—the summit in which I took part.

We also called for convening an Arab summit in the tripartite meeting that was held in Baghdad between Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and in which I participated. And this remains our stand. We supported the UAE's call for convening an Arab summit.

Yasir 'Arafat ruled out that the Egyptian president expressed a direct desire to visit Israel.

He said: I believe that he meant to visit Israel if Israel expresses readiness to achieve a just peace and to recognize the Palestinian people's right to achieve self-rule.

Reports said that the Egyptian president expressed readiness to visit Israel in the interest of the Palestine question.

POLITIKA Interviews Yasir 'Arafat

AU2712174788 Belgrade POLITIKA in Serbo-Croatian 22 Dec 88 pp 1-2

["Special interview" with Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, by Borivoj Erdeljan—in 'Arafat's Belgrade residence "last night"]

[Text] [Erdeljan] In chess talk, after the November meeting of the Palestinian National Council in Algeria, the UN General Assembly meeting in Geneva and your news conference that followed, and the opening of the dialogue with the United States, the PLO has been playing a "rapid diplomatic game."

What is expected to be the next move?

['Arafat] As you can assume, we have a specific strategic plan about peace which we announced at the session of the Palestinian National Council in Algeria. In a way, I reiterated this plan at the meeting of the UN General Assembly in Geneva. We continued this practice through Palestinian-American dialogue. We call this a "peace attack." This "invasion" is based on the Palestinian initiative I proposed in Geneva.

[Erdeljan] The opening of the dialogue with the United States has been expected for a long time. However, when can one expect these talks to acquire an essential value and to expand into something much greater than meetings with U. S. Ambassador to Tunisia Pelletreau?

['Arafat] I think that, as far as an essential meeting is concerned, we have already had one, with Ambassador Pelletreau and as far as the level is concerned, I think we shall have to wait for the new administration. There is only 1 month to go.

Besides, Pelletreau is not only the ambassador to Tunisia, but also a political personality. He possesses political import and has had many important political roles, be it in contacts with other Arab countries or with other American partners.

[Erdeljan] In the brief statement you made after coming to Belgrade you said that "Yugoslavia has a special role." Can you be a little more specific following the talks you had with Dizdarevic and Suvar, presidents of the State Presidency and the party Presidium?

['Arafat] We again confirmed the special role your country plays, considering its position; I mean primarily its position in the Nonaligned Movement.

In that connection, it is not accidental that it was decided that Yugoslavia becomes the host of the ninth summit of the nonaligned countries. That points to the great confidence your country enjoys among nonaligned countries and its prestige in the international sphere.

In this context, I have discussed many issues with the president of the state and the president of the party. We talked about the Yugoslav role. We also considered Yugoslavia's position in Europe and, on the other hand, its specific relations with Arab countries. I would stress here the friendly, specific relations that exist between Yugoslavia and Palestine.

[Erdeljan] When can one expect the Palestinian Government to be formed and where will it have its seat? Algeria, Tunisia, and Cairo have been mentioned.

['Arafat] First of all, I would like to stress that our brothers in Tunisia have expressed their willingness to offer their hospitality to our interim government. We have not received this message only through informal channels, but also from Ben Ali, president of the Republic of Tunisia. As far as the government itself is concerned, we have been preparing certain studies....

[Erdeljan] Agencies report that during your visit to Vienna you said that according to your vision, the Palestinian state will need 2 years to come into being.

['Arafat] They asked me if my prediction was 5 years, but I answered, if God wills it, it will be within 2 years.

[Eredljan] Will the borders of the future state run along what we today call the West Bank and Gaza?

['Arafat] This state will be founded on the Palestinian occupied territories.

[Erdeljan] How do you assess the present reaction? Where does the greatest support for a diplomatic PLO come and where does opposition lie, if it exists?

['Arafat] First of all, the Arab response was very good on the whole. The entire Arab world supports the Palestinian initiative and it is not accidental that the foreign ministers of all Arab countries were present in Geneva when I addressed the UN General Assembly. They also decided to reactivate their seven-member committee....

[Erdeljan] Are there any negative attitudes? They were reported from Tripoli and Syria.

['Arafat] As far as Libya is concerned, it is not true that demonstrations against the PLO's moves took place there. A skirmish took place in the street where our office is situated in Tripoli, but this was resolved.

As regards Syria—I am here speaking on the behalf of the PLO—and as regards those organizations which belong to certain Arab countries' intelligence services, I do not have any contacts with them. And I do not speak on their behalf.

All Palestinian organizations are within the PLO. The National Council, which is a democratic forum, held a meeting in Algeria and adopted a decision which was accepted by everyone, that is to say, everybody supports it. Those who had some reservations expressed them at the meeting democratically, as is done in every parliament.

[Erdeljan] How do you view the development of contacts with supporters in Israel?

['Arafat] According to the decisions of our National Council, we are developing a dialogue with all Israelis who support our rights and believe in peace. The question is whether the Israeli Government intends to annul the law according to which everyone of its citizens who comes into contact with us is subject to punishment.

To annul this decision the government needs two-thirds of the votes in the Knesset (Israeli parliament), but this does not exist.

[Erdeljan] What do you think about the newly-formed Israeli government of the old Likud-Labor formula?

['Arafat] This is a government of paralysis. The Labor Party unfortunately renounced its election platform and is returning to the positions of the Likud. The government's program contains a "no" to talks with the PLO, the creation of a PLO state, and a return to the borders of 4 July 1967, and a "yes" for the building of settlements on the occupied territories.

Shamir has already issued the order to the army not to observe moral principles in dealing with the Palestinian uprising, the participants in the "intifadah," and stated that all brutal measures, including killing, are permissible.

I honestly ask the citizens of Israel: Has the Labor Party of Israel disappeared or is it on the way to disappearing....

[Erdeljan] Has the "intifadah" been the stimulus to the political initiative of the PLO and has it speeded up its offensive?

['Arafat] The Palestinian initiative for peace is the consequence of two basic processes. The first is "intifadah" and the second is our long-lasting struggle in the camps in Lebanon....

[Erdeljan] What are the relations like between the PLO and the USSR at present?

['Arafat] We have good relations with them....

'Text' of PLO Executive Committee Statement

JN2812175188 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1605 GMT 28 Dec 88

["Text" of statement the PLO Executive Committee issued at the end of its 24-26 December session in Baghdad]

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee held a session of meetings in Baghdad 24-26 December. During these meetings, the PLO Executive Committee reviewed the political situation in the Palestinian, Arab, and international arenas, foremost the development of the great popular uprising in the occupied territories and the support, assistance, and momentum it needs.

The Executive Committee noted with responsibility and pride the great political successes the PLO has attained on the world level in an ever-escalating manner, successes that were embodied in the growing international consensus on supporting the Palestinian peace plan as formulated by the PNC in its recent Algiers session to fulfill our people's right to freedom and independence.

The transfer of the UN General Assembly session from New York to Geneva to hear the voice of Palestinian freedom from PLO Executive Committee Chairman brother Yasir 'Arafat is of great significance and expresses the firmness of world recognition of our people's right to establish their independent state on their national soil.

This also points out that Palestinian right has moved to the stage of practical implementation. The resounding world response to Palestinian rights as expressed in the speech of Palestinian freedom and peace has opened broad horizons to our heroic people's uprising, which is determined to continue and escalate until the Israeli occupation of our occupied territories is terminated and our people are allowed to establish their independent national state.

From the premise of its meticulous abidance by the PNC resolutions and its perusal of these resolutions and their implementation in conformity with our people's aspirations, the PLO Executive Committee reaffirms that brother Yasir 'Arafat's speech at the UN General Assembly session in Geneva and his press statement there are in full harmony with these resolutions.

The PLO Executive Committee voices its denunciation of the discordant voices in the region that have lost patience as a result of the isolation in which our national achievements have placed them.

They resorted to misinterpretations to obscure brilliant success and scoffed at the maturity of the people of the uprising and their national program, which the national uprising command has expressed in its call No 31.

In this respect, the PLO Executive Committee calls for the further closing of national ranks and for safeguarding them from any violation that will only serve the enemy.

The PLO Executive Committee also reaffirms its full confidence in the soundness of our political program that has besieged the enemies, isolated them in the international arena, made the world's conscience rally around the Palestinian draft solution, and ended the stage of U.S. disregard for the PLO and our people's rights.

This makes us more determined to proceed along this course, which is committed to our people's interests and the goals of their national struggle, particularly since our political program daily garners more national, pan-Arab, and international support from the premise that it is in practice the sound course for attaining a balance between regional and international considerations under the new international frame of mind and provides elements of comprehensive world pressure on the Israeli challenge, which finds itself isolated to the point of strangulation.

So far more than 90 states have officially recognized the Palestinian state. In this regard, the Executive Committee registered its high appreciation for the fraternal and friendly states, at the head of which is the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, the PRC, the nonaligned states, the Islamic states, and the African states for their support of our political program and the proclamation of the Palestinian state.

The Executive Committee has registered its satisfaction with the improvement that distinguishes the stands of Western European states for their different level of welcome for the Palestinian peace plan and called on them for additional improvement.

The Executive Committee expressed its deep feeling and high appreciation for the spiritual and political meaning expressed by his holiness the pope's reception of brother Yasir 'Arafat, support for the Palestinian people's right to an independent state, and the significance of this reception and blessing on Christmas Eve. It considered this stand Vatican support for the people of the land of the prophets.

The Executive Committee studied features of the suffocating isolation of Israeli policy and the formation of the new Israeli war government. It referred to the danger portended by the coalition, which exists on the basis of denying the Palestinian people's rights and international unanimity and on the basis of attempting to crush the Palestinian uprising.

The Executive Committee believed that Israeli policy will seek to face international unanimity, the Palestinian successes, and the opening of U.S.-Palestinian dialogue with an attempt to export its domestic crisis by resorting to its military and terrorist arm against our people's camps in Lebanon in collusion with its agents in the region and against some Arab states, especially after the recent Israeli and U.S. threats against brotherly Libya in an attempt to divert attention from the crux [of the matter] to another scene.

Therefore, the embryo of Israeli terrorism calls on the Arab states to be more vigilant, cautious, and aware to face the Israeli war program. This is to be done by preparing themselves to deter this danger, by raising forms of Arab solidarity to a higher level, and by speeding the convening of an Arab summit conference.

With great attention, the Executive Committee studied the Israeli occupation's plans to subjugate the uprising materially and politically. It examined the new Israeli conspiracy, which calls for holding elections in the occupied territories to implement autonomy.

It observed that this plan is not a mere maneuver, but a counter political plan to the Palestinian political plan aimed at bypassing international resolutions; diverting world attention from the demand to establish the Palestinian state; and preoccupying it with a new Israeli conspiracy, which wears the mask of an alternative solution.

The Executive Committee resolved to reject such elections under occupation and within the framework of autonomy. It called on world public opinion to be

cautious about the Israeli deception. It asserted the demand for Israeli withdrawal and placing the occupied territory under temporary international supervision during a transitional stage.

As for the election mockery, the Palestinian people have responded to it by freely choosing the PLO as their sole legitimate representative, from which there will be no retreat and in which there is no hesitation.

The Executive Committee praised Iraq's support for our people, the steadfastness of brotherly Iraq under the leadership of the knight Saddam Husayn, and its glorious victory in its heroic defense of the Arab homeland's eastern gate.

This victory has provided the Palestinian people and their blessed uprising with a new Arab and international situation, which has helped them move on an improved political map.

Salah Khalaf Holds News Conference in Kuwait

JN2812171088 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic
27 Dec 88 p 29

[By Fatimah Mansur]

[Text] Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf, also known as Abu Iyad, has praised his highness the amir's stand, his support for the Palestinian uprising, and his devoting all capabilities to showing the sufferings of the Palestinian people.

This came in a statement by Salah Khalaf at the beginning of the news conference at PLO headquarters [in Kuwait]. The news conference was attended by correspondents of Arab and international news agencies.

Salah Khalaf reiterated the PLO's stand vis-a-vis the recent American threats against Libya. He said: We hope that the United States will not commit such a stupidity by attacking Libya.

He added: If America launches an aggression against Libya, we will consider this an aggression against the PLO. We will fight with the Libyan people. There should be a unified Arab stand vis-a-vis these threats, he added.

Abu Iyad said that the blessed Palestinian uprising will continue despite all attempts by the Zionist forces and all the enemy forces' repressive methods.

Abu Iyad welcomed the recent agreement between the Amal Movement and Fatah in Lebanon. He described the agreement as a step to prepare the fighters there. He added that the agreement paved the way for the return of approximately 20,000 Palestinian refugees to their camps in Al-Rashidiyah and Burj al-Barajinah.

Khalaf affirmed the need to convene an Arab summit conference to discuss the Lebanese problem and elect a Lebanese president.

He disclosed plans the Israeli coalition government intends to carry out in the coming stage. He said: These plans call for committing collective crimes in the occupied territory and in more than one area. This government has prepared special units for this purpose.

He added: This government is also planning to carry out large-scale assassinations against Palestinian leaders. It will try to carry out large terrorist operations and blame them on the Palestinians.

The Israelis might hold dissident Palestinian factions responsible for these operations to undermine the relationship between the PLO and other countries. He affirmed that these plans will not stop the uprising.

Khalaf called for reinforcing national unity among the PLO factions through the call for a meeting of the Central Council to discuss the related issues and the developments in a democratic atmosphere.

Abu Iyad affirmed the PLO did not make any concessions by accepting Resolutions No 242 and 338 but presented a political program for movement in the coming stage; this is called the peace attack.

Khalaf said: The decision of the PLO and the Unified Leadership of the Uprising is not to use arms other than stones because of their big effect on the enemy and to avoid giving the enemy an excuse to use its weapons against the sons of the uprising.

He expressed hope that the dialogue with America will be a step toward reaching American public opinion. He said: I am not pessimistic.

Abu Iyad congratulated Algerian President Chadli Benjedid on his reelection for a third term. He said: This man stood with the uprising and the Palestinian people in all stages of the Palestine question.

At the beginning of the news conference, Abu Iyad wondered about the U.S. Administration's stand and silence toward the atomic bombs in Israel and the thousands of small and large factories producing chemical materials there.

He expressed the hope that America would not commit a new stupidity and carry out its threats against Libya because this would constitute an aggression against all Arabs.

Abu Iyad touched on the recent GCC summit and described its resolutions as positive, particularly with regard to the Palestinian people and the State of Palestine. He expressed his hope that the resolutions adopted would be a declared support for the uprising.

Abu Iyad said: The Algiers resolutions, to which all Palestinians have contributed, came in the hope that a Palestinian political move would be launched to reach a just, comprehensive settlement in the region.

By this settlement we mean Israeli withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied in 1967: Golan, Lebanon, and the West Bank, including Jerusalem and Gaza.

This settlement should be through an international peace conference to be attended by all parties concerned, including the PLO. Such a conference is the right venue for discussing all issues, withdrawal procedures, and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination on their land.

Abu Iyad affirmed that this is the settlement the PLO wants. He said the political move took place after these resolutions.

He indicated that the statement issued by the Israeli coalition government was hysterical and reflected political insanity by confirming the slogan: No to the PLO, no to a political solution, and yes to crushing the uprising.

He said: The world reacted by isolating Israel further and accusing the coalition government of seeking to obstruct all peace moves.

Abu Iyad affirmed that this statement should be a lesson for us. He also affirmed that after what was done in Geneva, the PLO must not respond to any other pressures.

Abu Iyad revealed a plot against the Palestinians. He said the PLO is being asked to begin a confederation with Jordan as from now. This is to emerge with an acceptable joint delegation, as U.S. and Israeli circles call it.

He noted that the aim of this is to foment differences among the resistance factions and return the ball to the Palestinian court.

Abu Iyad warned against this dangerous game against the Palestine question. However, he affirmed that in view of its new stands, Jordan will not agree to rejoin the game.

He said: This dangerous game is also aimed at fomenting differences within the ranks of the Palestinian revolution after dragging the PLO into accepting direct negotiations outside an international conference and implying from a distance that we accept self-rule first, which can then be developed.

Abu Iyad indicated that some European states adopt some of these points to faciliate the negotiations process within an international conference, or within direct negotiations, as they claim.

He said: Therefore, we must be cautious and vigilant. What we have offered so far is enough, if not more than the PNC resolutions.

He indicated that in this regard the Palestinian and Arab political move must isolate Israel further and promote U.S.-Palestinian dialogue, which began slowly in Tunis.

He affirmed that this Palestinian move must be on the same basis; that is, slow. He justified this by saying that if the PLO moves quickly, the Americans and the Israelis will benefit greatly.

He recalled what happened to Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat when they pressured him with Camp David and forced him to go ahead with it until they took everything from him.

Abu Iyad noted that continuing and supporting the uprising must currently be the first priority, especially during the next few months, to thwart all these plots.

He referred to Kuwaiti welfare week, which will begin 7 February 1989, hoping that support for the people in the occupied territories will be as hoped for.

Abu Iyad revealed the course that the PLO will adopt. He also announced that the PLO will continue to support the uprising and ensure its continuation to face the conspiracies being hatched to prevent the implementation of the PNC resolutions and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

He added that this course is based on working seriously to develop the Palestinian armed struggle in the areas that are not currently witnessing uprising activities so as to bring about an integration of political and military action.

He indicated that any interpretation of military action as terrorist acts is rejected. He affirmed that each step on the road of peace will reduce and decrease the momentum of our military action. He added that all means must be utilized in the battle to counter Israeli intransigence.

Abu Iyad called for intensifying Arab efforts to achieve Arab solidarity; resolve outstanding problems; and rectify the relations between Syria on the one hand and Iraq, Egypt, and the PLO on the other.

He voiced the hope that the good offices being exerted will yield positive results in the interests of all parties in general and the Palestine question in particular.

He affirmed that the most important problem that must be expeditiously resolved is the Lebanese crisis. He added that this should result in the election of a president for Lebanon to ensure its unity.

He warned that any delay in this issue will negatively affect not only the Palestine question, but also the Arab nation and the region as a whole.

Abu Iyad indicated that the perpetuation of the status quo in Lebanon will serve the interests of Israel as well as those of the enemies of the Arab nation.

He called for an Arab summit to tackle the Lebanese issue and said: Lebanon deserves an Arab foreign ministers conference, which has been postponed more than once. It also deserves a summit, as Lebanon is a main nerve in the Arab nation's body.

Khalaf asserted that the desired expansion of Arab solidarity will not materialize if the Lebanese issue is left unresolved.

He went on to say: If such a thing materializes, it will help the PLO and the Palestinian revolution build a unified Arab stand to confront the challenges facing the Arab nation either through the PLO's political moves or by bringing about an end to the U.S. threats against Libya or other Arab states.

Abu Iyad disclosed that Israel will carry out a scheme in the next few weeks. He said this scheme entails dealing blows to the uprising—blows that will be far greater in terms of scale and strength than those Israel has been dealing to the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories and other measures that Israel has been carrying out.

He added that this scheme involves the perpetration of mass massacres in more than one area in the occupied territories.

Khalaf said that special units have been formed to carry out these massacres.

Abu Iyad asserted that the perpetration of these crimes will not undermine the continuation and escalation of the uprising. He said that Israel will deal one blow in the beginning and then wait for the reaction. Then, Israel will complete its blows in the occupied territories.

Khalaf clarified the other points entailed in this scheme—namely, the escalation of strikes in Lebanon until they reach the point of friction with the Syrians.

He added that there might be some [Israeli] infiltration into Jordan to create a new reality and thus push the Arabs toward forgetting what is prevailing on the international scene regarding a settlement: the peace offensive launched by the PLO, which enjoys the support of most Arab states.

Abu Iyad went on to say: The scheme also involves the launching of a large-scale assassination campaign targeting most Palestinian leaders. These assassination attempts will take place in the coming weeks.

The scheme also entails the launching of terrorist attacks by the Mosad against Jewish targets to insinuate that the Palestinians are behind them.

In the beginning, such attacks may be attributed to dissident PLO factions.

However, such attacks will seek to harm the Palestinians to sabotage relations or, bluntly, to end the dialogue that has begun between the United States and the PLO.

Abu Iyad affirmed that these practical schemes related to the Israeli-American political schemes aim at pushing the PLO toward divisions and entrenching these divisions by trying to find imaginary political solutions.

Abu Iyad called on all resistance factions to achieve unity. He called for an urgent meeting of the PLO leaders to be followed by an urgent meeting of the Palestinian Central Council to discuss all steps achieved after the PNC session in the same democratic spirit with which we discussed the PLO political program.

Abu Iyad warned that if there is a lack of harmony among all resistance factions the cause and implementation of the recent PNC session would be greatly harmed.

Abu Iyad called on all Palestinian leaders to close their ranks in the institutions on which they agreed. The leaders should hold a preliminary meeting to discuss all that has been achieved in the wake of the Algiers resolutions, particularly since there are big forces lying in wait for the Palestinians.

He called on all parties to close their ranks, meet together, embark on a discussion, and make the appropriate decisions expressing the opinion of everyone, as happened at the PNC.

He reiterated that reinforcing national unity will have a great effect on the success or failure of the uprising.

Abu Iyad called on the Arab nation to support the uprising so there would be one Arab move against the Israeli expulsion of a large number of Palestinians from the occupied territories. He also called on the Arab countries to apply pressure on the influential states.

Answering a question on whether the PLO will make other concessions regardless of the pressures, Abu Iyad said:

We did not make any concessions. We presented a political program on our view vis-a-vis the solution, that is, the settlement. I believe that what we have presented was sufficient, very sufficient. And presenting anything more means that we will be presenting from assets, not reserves. This means we have to cut from our own flesh.

Therefore, we affirm that the political statement and Abu 'Ammar's [Yasir 'Arafat's] speech in Geneva are completely sufficient for the political movement.

Abu Iyad warned against falling into the trap of promises into which Al-Sadat fell, making continuous concessions until we reached the crisis of the previous years.

On the reasons behind not developing the weapon of the uprising, Abu Iyad said: Our decision is to continue the uprising in the same peaceful manner which they have been following since the beginning. This is because the stone has greater effects than other weapons.

Israel hopes we would use other weapons so it could use its well-known weapons. From this premise, we believe that the method used by the uprising is sufficient. In reply to a question on claims by some that the PLO has accepted and is currently seeking what it rejected from Al-Sadat, Abu Iyad said:

Everything being said in this regard will not undermine our stand. We have an ongoing uprising in the occupied territories, an ensuing Jordanian step by King Husayn to sever ties with the West Bank, and international detente. What has happened is that we have launched a political initiative included in the PNC resolutions. Yes, we are heading toward a settlement.

Abu Iyad added: What I want to clarify here is that our objection to Al-Sadat's stand rested on the fact that he acted single-handed. As for us, we have done everything collectively. We have learned the lesson.

I voiced my opinion twice in this regard and said Al-Sadat was cornered at Camp David. So, he sought to come out with a victory. He accepted all concessions.

As for the present, Egypt recognizes the Palestinian state; this step, from our perspective, is a great one. It counters the provisions in the Palestinian portion of the Camp David accords. This means that we have to get hold of and pursue the positive steps. That is why we pay no attention to anyone who interprets and reads what we do the way he likes.

In reply to a question on why at this time the PLO has recognized Resolutions 242 and 338 and announced that it is content to establish a Palestinian state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, although it was not willing to do so previously, and why it delayed takng these steps for years, Khalaf said:

At present, we have proclaimed the Palestinian state. Hence, the issue regarding our approval or disapproval of international resolutions does not arise. We want a state. In 1974 we announced that we wanted a state even if t were to be established on 1 inch of Palestinian territory.

In reply to a question on the interrelationship between the Lebanese issue and the Palestine question, Abu Iyad said:

First, I would like to point out that [UAE President] Shaykh Zayid was the first to call for an Arab summit on Lebanon. We in turn called for this summit because we have to reach a solution, as the serious problem currently plaguing Lebanon is the preparation for partition.

Abu Iyad added: Therefore, an Arab summit to be attended by Syria is a must, as Syria's failure to attend will prevent the summiteers from reaching positive results on Lebanon. It is not fair to see the Lebanese people continue to pay the price for the failure to resolve the Palestine question or other issues.

At least, a solution must be currently initiated on Lebanese territory through the formation of a neutral committee, with Syria as a member, to supervise the conduct of national dialogue. I trust that all Lebanese parties want a solution.

On the agreement signed in Lebanon between the Fatah Movement's command and the Amal Movement, Khalaf said: We welcome and hail this agreement.

Abu Iyad affirmed that Nabih Birri is serious about this agreement.

Faruq Qaddumi Discusses Palestinian Affairs

JN2901110080 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0930 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 29 Dec (WAKH)—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has described Yitzhaq Shamir's initiative to bring about peace in the Middle East as a conspiracy against the Palestinian people and their just cause.

Qaddumi accused Shamir personally and the Likud policy of being the basic obstacle to peace.

In a statement to a WAKH correspondent in Baghdad, Qaddumi said the Likud policy has destroyed all international initiatives designed to establish a lasting, just, and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

The Palestinian official denounced the Israeli intransigence toward the current international move. He said all that is said by Shamir, as a terrorist with a black history, aims to close the door to any international initiative.

Qaddumi pointed out that Israel's call on the United States to stop the dialogue with the PLO clearly shows that Israel does not seek peace; on the contrary, Israel continues to create unrest and to pursue both repression against the Palestinian people and terrorism inside and outside the occupied territories.

Reports had said Israeli Prime Minister Shamir is prepared to announce the details of a political initiative which aims, as was reported, to bring about peace in the Middle East.

Qaddumi stressed the need for a genuine confrontation of Israel's aggressive, expansionist policy. He said: The conflict is continuing and will be maintained because the Israeli rulers do not seek peace at all; on the contrary, they want to exterminate our Palestinian people.

He asserted that the Palestinian people, as a militant people, have the right to continue the hot confrontation and also their blessed uprising in order to uproot Israeli occupation.

The head of the PLO Political Department said struggle is the only way to extricate the rights from Israel and the United States. He pointed out that lengthy experience has irrefutably proved there is no other way to extricate the Palestinian people's rights.

He added: We should not have any illusion that Israel and its rulers may recognize the Palestinian people's national rights or their right to self-determination.

Qaddumi said: They [the Israelis] seek an incomplete self-rule. They want to keep the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under their control. They want a condominium.

Qaddumi emphasized that the Israeli rulers will not willingly recognize the Palestinian people's rights unless they are compelled to do so through the wise use of violence and also through the legitimate resistance methods being pursued by the Palestinian people in order to uproot Israeli occupation and remove all its effects from the occupied Palestinian territories.

Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi] ruled out the possibility of Israel taking steps toward peace. He said: I am not optimistic as long as this colonialist mentality, which was planted by the Zionist movement, is present in the Arab nation's heart.

The PLO Political Department head described the Palestinian uprising as a new war of attrition against Israel. He said the Israelis admitted that the stonethrowing revolution is a war against the army and the society at the same time, which has been proved by experience.

Qaddumi denounced the Israeli and U.S. reactions to the recent PLO flexibility toward the achievement of peace. He said: The Israeli rulers believe this flexibility emanates from weakness so they continue to have more demands and ambitions and maintain their aggressive, expansionist policy without giving true explanations.

He added these reactions require that we should be very cautious in dealing with the Zionist entity and the United States.

Qaddumi did not rule out that the U.S. Administration may change its stand on holding a dialogue with the PLO, citing as an example the U.S.-Soviet statement which was issued in October 1977 and canceled 48 hours later.

He wondered: Given that a statement issued by a superpower was canceled within 48 hours, what will be the course of the U.S.-Palestinian relationship?

He added: The road to hell still has people with good intentions. However, Abu al-Lutf supported the continuation of dialogue with the United States despite the possibilities of making mistakes and the failure to yield results. He said: We should proceed and we can be wrong or right but we will eventually reach the sound path.

The Palestinian official cast doubt on the future of the Palestinian-U.S. dialogue and on the possibility of yielding positive results. He said: I am not optimistic and this emanates from lengthy experience throughout history.

He asserted that the United States agreed to open a dialogue and not negotiations with the PLO.

The U.S. Administration, he said, did not recognize the right to self-determination nor did it recognize the independent Palestinian state.

He stressed the need for the world to be well aware that Palestinians and the PLO seek peace and that the obstacles to the peace march in this world are the United States and Israel.

Abu al-Lutf declined to comment on the stand of the new U.S. President toward the dialogue with the PLO.

He said: We should not judge matters before we see them but the experience with U.S. Administrations does not herald good news.

The PLO Political Departmnent head ruled out the possibility of establishing a Palestinian government at this particular time.

He said: First, I would like to say that the PLO is now assuming the responsibility of a provisional government. I do not think it is time to begin the establishment of this government in its separate form.

Qaddumi added: Perhaps, in the next few months some circumstances will emerge and they may result in the establishment of this government, but so far there has been nothing which may indicate that we will establish a Palestinian government in a separate form.

He stressed the need to conduct wide studies on the form of the government, its relationship with the PLO, and its tasks. He said: We are now conducting wide studies on the Palestinian government, its relationship with the PLO, and its role in the national front.

Qaddumi added that the committee which he chaired presented to the PNC session in Algiers preliminary studies on the government but these studies require further detailed study.

Abu al-Lutf urged the Arab states which have not yet carried out their full duty toward the Palestine question to fulfill their duties toward the uprising and the Palestinian people.

He said this includes material and political support and there should be an Arab political support for the PLO so the latter will not be left alone, because, as Abu al-Lutf says, the Palestine question is an Arab cause first of all and this was emphasized by all Arab summit conferences.

He said the reactivation being witnessed in the Arab homeland after halting the war in the Gulf region is proceeding slowly and steadily. He stressed the need to hold an Arab summit conference, which will remove many inter-Arab differences and promote the pan-Arab march.

Qaddumi asserted that all PLO offices in the world will be turned into embassies of the State of Palestine. He said this transformation embodies a UN resolution recognizing the Palestinian state and it also calls on the Palestinian masses to be optimistic.

At the same time, this transformation strengthens the Palestinian uprising and instills concern and fear in the Israeli society, he added.

Qaddumi reiterated the importance of continuing the uprising in the occupied territories and resisting the occupation. He said: There should be wise use of violence by which the masses can express their rejection of occupation in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Qaddumi added that the UN resolutions and charter approved the Palestinian people's right to resist and uproot Israeli occupation. He emphasized that the PLO, while exercising its natural right to resistance, stands against terrorism and supports all UN resolutions issued against terrorism.

PLO's 'Abd Rabbuh on Dialogue, Government

JN2812184688 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1710 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Excerpt] PLO Executive Committee member Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh has stated that the U.S. decision to initiate direct dialogue with the PLO is a slight change in Washington's stand but is not sufficient to settle the Palestinian cause.

'Abd Rabbuh, who is currently in Jordan with PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, added that the U.S. Administration must choose between Israel's policy or the international trend if it wants to play a positive role settling the Arab-Israeli conflict.

'Abd Rabbuh headed the PLO's delegation to the dialogue in Tunis in mid-December with U.S. Ambassador to Tunisia Robert Pelletreau.

The Palestinian official described the dialogue as preliminary talks between the PLO and the United States. He said that the PLO will perhaps ask for a second meeting with the U.S. Administration soon to discuss political issues, including the question of the formation of a preparatory committee for the convocation of the international conference.

On the PLO's efforts to form a Palestinian provisional government, 'Abd Rabbuh affirmed that the formation of this government will be announced in the next 2 months. He said the PLO Executive Committee will meet in the Tunisian capital next month to put the final touches on the formation of this government.

On his talks with Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i, 'Abd Rabbuh said that these talks seek to develop a unified Arab stand to be submitted worldwide for convening an international Middle East peace conference.

He said these talks are part of the PLO's efforts to contact all the Arab countries, particularly those directly concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict, to adopt a unified stand on the international conference. [passage omitted]

Further on Remarks in Amman

JN2912075888 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 29-30 Dec 23 pp 1, 2

[By Najwa Najjar]

[Text] Amman—"The American move to open formal contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) represents only "minor changes in policy which do not satisfy the conditions for peace in the Middle East," according to a member of the PLO Executive Committee who also says that Washington has to choose between the international and Israeli positions on how to settle the Palestinian problem.

Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh, who is also spokesman for a high-level PLO delegation which held talks with Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i Tuesday on the latest developments in the new Palestinian peace strategy, said that although the U.S. decision to launch a dialogue with the PLO was "a factual recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," Washington's stand was far short of contributing positively to realising a just and comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement.

Speaking to reporters Wednesday morning [Yasir 'Abd Rabbuh] said the PLO delegation's talks here covered issues related to a proposed Arab summit and crystallising a united Arab position behind the new PLO strategy for Middle East peace which is in line with the will of the international community.

The international community supports the idea of convening an effective international conference with the participation of the PLO and all other parties involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict and the five permanent members of the Security Council and sees the first step in this

direction as setting up a preparatory committee made up of the permanent Security Council members to contact all sides to iron out differences.

To date, the U.S. maintains a different interpretation of the international conference and calls for direct Arab-Israeli negotiations under the "umbrella" of the U.N.

However, 'Abd Rabbuh noted Wednesday, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz accepted the idea of a preparatory committee when the proposal was put forward by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

"We now want to make this action more formal and make the pre-conference consultations more effective," 'Abd Rabbuh said. "We want more focus on the basic issues and realistic moves towards convening an international conference."

On the other hand, Israel rejects the idea of an international conference and refuses to deal with the PLO. Instead, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir is seeking to revive the 1979 U.S.-brokered Camp David accords between Israel and Egypt which call for "Palestinian autonomy," 'Abd Rabbuh pointed out.

"The only difference this time is that Shamir wants (the Camp David provisions) under the auspices of the two superpowers instead of one," he said. "Any continuation of this policy of blindness will only lead to a deadlock," he said.

'Abd Rabbuh, who attended a round of talks between the PLO and the U.S. in Tunis earlier this month—the first formal meeting between the two sides in 13 years—said another encounter was scheduled to be held in the second half of February to discuss "political issues."

He said he believed that the new U.S. administration of George Bush, who takes office Jan. 20, will continue the same policy outlined by the outgoing Reagan administration. "I don't see any reason why it should not," 'Abd Rabbuh said.

Answering a question whether the U.S. goal of opening a dialogue with the PLO was an end to the one-year-old Palestinian uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, 'Abd Rabbuh said the intifada was not an issue up for discussions with the U.S.

However, he disclosed that a document prepared by Shultz and passed on to the PLO through the Swedish government in early December "hinted at a moratorium (on the uprising) once negotiations begin at the international conference."

"But, we said that unless this clause was cancelled, we would not discuss anything. Subsequently, the clause was cancelled," 'Abd Rabbuh said. "The intifada is a movement of an entire people, not a military or paramilitary operation."

Vowing that the uprising will continue until the Palestinian people achieve their goal of an independent state, 'Abd Rabbuh said: "Without the intifada, all that is presently being discussed will not mean anything. It is our basic line of policy."

According to 'Abd Rabbuh the immediate political programme of the PLO includes strengthened relations with Arab states, with particular focus on the countries on the confrontation line with Israel.

In this context, 'Abd Rabbuh indicated that there was a possibility of rapprochement between the PLO and Syria. "We are hoping for a Palestinian-Syrian dialogue," he said without elaboration.

An Arab summit is expected to be held in the next two months. By then, the PLO is also expected to announce a provisional government representing the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories, 'Abd Rabbuh said.

"Studies and consultations on the provisional government are ongoing and details will be discussed at the next meeting of the PLO Executive Committee," he said.

Asked why Mustafa al-Zibri, representative of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) did not attend this week's meeting of the PLO Executive Committee in Baghdad and why he voiced criticism of the PLO chairman's peace strategy, 'Abd Rabbuh said there had always been differences within the PLO.

"But we have proved that we can solve these problems," he said. "Moreover, due to the intifada, the differences have been reduced and we can call them 'ijtihadat' (interpretations)," he said.

PFLP, DFLP Criticize 'Arafat Statements

NC2812132088 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Following a meeting between PFLP Secretary General Dr George Habash and DFLP Secretary General Nayfi Hawatimah, the PFLP and DFLP issued a joint communique renewing their criticism of Yasir 'Arafat's Geneva statements containing a recognition of Israel.

The joint communique, which was issued in Damascus, affirmed that 'Arafat's statements do not conform with the PNC resolutions in Algiers, are not binding on the PLO in any way, and do not represent the PLO's official policy.

The joint communique denounced the pressure which the U.S. Administration is excercising on the PLO leadership and warned the Palestinian right wing against continuing the policy of free compromises.

PNSF, Communists Discuss Anti-Libya Threats

JN2712203488 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] The leaderships of the PNSF and of the Revolutionary Palestinian Communist Party [RPCP] have held a meeting during which they discussed the dimensions of the U.S. threats directed against the Libyan Jamahiriyah on the pretext that it established a plant capable of producing chemical weapons.

They also discussed the issue pertaining to the fact these threats have become tantamount to a military preparation for launching aggression against Libyan and pan-Arab sovereignty.

The conferees agreed on the seriousness of this U.S. provocation, which is not only rejected by international laws and norms but also by the peoples of our Arab nation and its progressive forces, not to mention large sectors of world public opinion.

They affirmed that the United States, which provides the Zionist entity with all kinds of strategic armaments and with all types of plants to produce various types of weapons, including chemical and atomic weapons, is proving once again the falseness of the claims being propagated by the deviationists and America's Arabs about a U.S. change of heart in favor of the Arab issues in general and the Palestine question in particular.

By so doing, the United States is also affirming anew its anti-Arab stand as well as its conspiratorial behavior and malice that it harbors toward the Arab nation's pan-Arab, progressive, and liberation forces.

Furthermore, the United States, the conferees said, is projecting itself as a policeman to impose and consecrate the Zionist aggression in our region.

The statement issued by the PNSF and the RPCP adds: There is no doubt that the U.S. clamor which prepares for military aggression against the Libyan Jamahiriyah would not have reached this level and extent had it not been for the Arab silence being maintained by the parties to the Camp David accords and also by the parties that have confidence in the United States, in its policy, and in its friendship.

This places on the shoulders of the revolutionary Arab forces the responsibility of effecting a reawakening, a mobilization, and a preparedness to confront this provocation, whose objectives and goals go beyond attacking the alleged plant that is being run by the Libyan Jamahiriyah on its territory.

The statement goes on to say: This scheme seeks to quash one of the most prominent pan-Arab centers for opposing the proposed U.S. settlement plan and to terrorize the Arab nation and its peoples and its national liberation movement.

The conferees voiced readiness to provide the Jamahiriyah's steadfastness with all potentials and capabilities to prevent the U.S. aggression from achieving its objectives.

Sabri al-Banna Spokesman Extends Condolences

NC2912091288 Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 28 Dec 88 p 9

[Text] The Fatah-Revolutionary Organization led by Sabri al-Banna (Abu Nidal) has extended its condolences to the families of the victims of the U.S. airliner crash in Scotland last week.

A statement by organization spokesman 'Atif Abu Bakr said: "In the name of our movement, we extend condolences to the families of the victims of the ill-fated U.S. airliner and express our deep sorrow over this catastrophe."

Abu Bakr criticized President Reagan's policy and urged the new administration of President-elect George Bush to "distinguish between the Zionists occupying Palestine and U.S. interests."

Fatah-Revolutionary Council Claims Explosion

NC2712191588 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1730 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] An explosive charge has been detonated on Yafa Street in Jerusalem. Fatah-The Revolutionary Council has claimed responsibility for the blast, saying the operation was targeted against a group of Zionist soldiers in the area.

Meanwhile, the occupation authorities carried out a series of arrests in the wake of the explosion and scores of Arabs were detained.

Muragha Group Claims Attack on 'Terrorist Cell'

NC2912061288 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] The Abu Musa-led [Sa'id Musa Muragha] Fatah Uprising has announced that one of its groups has liquidated a terrorist cell manned by pro-Yasir 'Arafat gunmen.

The cell, according to the Fatah Uprising, was responsible for numerous attacks on Syrian forces' positions in West Beirut.

South Asian Regional Affairs

SAARC Summit Meeting Continues in Islamabad

Yaqub Khan Addresses Session

BK2712162088 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] The SAARC Council of Ministers meeting began in Islamabad today, in which the recommendations of the foreign secretaries' standing committee will be reviewed.

Speaking at the inaugural session, Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan stressed the need for ending distrust, doubt, and suspicion, and for establishing mutual trust to enable the member countries to implement plans to eliminate nuclear weapons from the region.

At the opening session Sahabzada Yaqub Khan was elected chairman of the SAARC ministerial conference.

Earlier, the 2-day session of the organization's foreign secretaries' standing committee ended after approving a report and other recommendations. The present chairman of the committee, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Dr Humayun Khan, presided over the session.

Disarmament Clause Delays Draft

BK2812161288 Hong Kong AFP in English 1555 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 28 (AFP)—India's objections to a clause on disarmament suggested by Pakistan have delayed agreement on a draft declaration to be submitted to the South Asian summit here this week, conference sources said.

The sources gave no details of the clause, part of a five to six page document, but said Indian opposition was strong.

"They are even arguing over commas and full stops," one source said.

The sources said the clause would either have to be seriously amended or dropped to get the agreement of all participants.

Pakistan was understood to be pushing for a commitment to end the arms race in the region. India was believed to have objected, seeing the clause as a veiled attack on its position.

The draft declaration is to be submitted to the summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), meeting here December 29-31.

SAARC foreign ministers from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka were holding a final meeting Wednesday night.

Foreign Ministers Approve Draft

BK2912001488 Hong Kong AFP in English 1942 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 28 (AFP)—Foreign ministers of South Asian states late Wednesday [28 December] approved a draft declaration to be adopted at a regional summit here this week, resolving a dispute between India and Pakistan.

The draft declaration is to be submitted to the summit of the seven-member South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which meets here December 29-31.

The foreign minister of host Pakistan, Sahabzada Yaqub Khan, told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE as he emerged from the late night session that the draft had been approved "on the basis of consensus."

India's earlier objection to a disarmament clause suggested by Pakistan delayed agreement on the draft declaration, conference sources said.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Humayun Khan, who is the conference spokesman, said the ministers had reached "an agreed formulation on disarmament."

Informed sources said the six-page document supported disarmament, but did not elaborate. Conference observers said "agreed formulation" indicated that the draft had been amended by Pakistan to appease India.

Sources earlier said Indian opposition was strong and that the clause would have to be seriously amended or dropped to get all participants to agree.

Pakistan was understood to be pushing for a commitment to end the arms race in the region. India was believed to have objected, seeing the clause as a veiled attack on its position.

The Council of Ministers has also endorsed Sri Lanka's offer to host the next summit in Colombo, the spokesman said.

SAARC includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The heads of states or governments are to arrive here Thursday for the summit, which will be opened by Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto later in the evening.

The sources said the draft dealt mainly with economic performance and the social improvement that can be gained by the member states through mutual cooperation. It calls for the creation of an environment of peace and security and for the respect of international laws to reduce tension in the region, the sources said.

They said the draft declaration also reaffirmed the states' commitment to peace and justice on the principles laid down by the U.N. Charter.

The official spokesman said the summit would call on South Asian countries to enact legislation for the implementation of the SAARC convention on terrorism. It also agreed on modalities for operating food security reserves to meet the countries emergency needs.

The Council of Ministers also decided to finish by April 1989 a study on the causes and consequences of natural disasters and on the protection and preservation of the environment.

Ministers Make Recommendations

BK2912035288 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] At its session in Islamabad last night, SAARC Ministerial Council approved draft of Islamabad declaration, which will be released after the conclusion of the fourth SAARC summit.

Pakistan's foreign secretary told newsmen after the session that the declaration would be submitted to the summit for consideration. The council also discussed the agenda of the summit and expressed satisfaction at the progress of the implementation of the coordinated mode of action. It also lauded the work of the technical committees.

The Council of Ministers has recommended to the summit conference to declare 1990 as the Year of Girls of South Asia and to prepare and implement appropriate programs for these girls.

The council also expressed satisfaction at the performance of the SAARC food reserves board, which formulates the strategy for the utilization of this reserve.

The council appreciated the enforcement of regional convention on terrorism and recommended to the member countries to take necessary steps to implement it.

The ministers approved the budget for the SAARC Secretariat for next year, which was recommended by the standing committee.

The council has decided to hold its next session in Islamabad during the upcoming summer.

Gandhi, Ershad Arrive

BK2912083088 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] The Indian prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi; the Bangladeshi president, Mr Hussain Mohammad Ershad; and the king of Bhutan, Mr Jigme Singye Wangchuk, arrived in Islamabad today to attend the fourth SAARC summit that opened in the federal capital this evening.

They were received at the airport by the president, Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and the prime minister, Ms Benazir Bhutto. Others present to receive the distinguished guests included the chairman of the Senate, Mr Wasim Sajjad; Speaker of the National Assembly Malik Mairaj Khalid; federal ministers; members of Parliament; and senior officials.

The distinguished guests were accorded a ceremonial welcome, including playing of national anthems of their countries and Pakistan and a guard of honor by contingents drawn from the three services.

Further on Gandhi Arrival

BK2912091588 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Excerpts] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, arrived in Islamabad shortly before noon today for the fourth SAARC Summit beginning this evening. At the airport he was given a ceremonial reception.

Leaving aside protocol, the Pakistan president, Mr Ghulam Ishaq Khan, was present at the airport and warmly greeted the prime minister as he alighted from the plane.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and other dignitaries also welcomed Mr Gandhi. [passage omitted]

Mr Gandhi will have three rounds of talks with Ms Benazir Bhutto. No agenda has been fixed for the talks. They are likely to discuss among other issues terrorism in Punjab and the Siachen issue. The delegations of the two countries will have a plenary meeting on Saturday. Some agreements are also likely to be signed.

During his stay in Islamabad, Mr Gandhi will meet President Jayewardene of Sri Lanka and other SAARC leaders.

Our correspondent Ratan Salve reports from Islamabad that the Pakistani media is attaching great importance to the Indian leader's visit. Pakistan TV telecast an interview with the external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao. Mr Rao said the time has come when SAARC should chalk out action-oriented programs of cooperation which directly benefit all in the region.

Our correspondent said the visit of the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has raised nigh expectations for peace and improved relations between India and Pakistan.

The daily NATION published from Lahore carried an extensive interview with the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, in today's edition. Mr Natwar Singh said that anything which stands in the way of goodneighborly relations between the two countries should be permanently removed.

Speaking to newsmen at the Delhi airport before his departure for Islamabad, the prime minister said India desires the best of relations with Pakistan. He said with the new democratically elected government there we will be able to lay foundations on which true friendship can be built.

Algeria

Italy's Andreotti Holds Talks With Bessaieh

LD2812132788 Algiers APS in English 1145 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Algiers, 28/12/88 (APS)—Algero-Italian political talks started Tuesday afternoon here and dealt mainly with bilateral cooperation and international issues.

The Foreign Affairs Minister Boualem Bessaieh and his Italian counterpart Giulio Andreotti also cited the process of unitarian edification of the Arab Great Maghreb and preparatory steps made since the Maghreban summit (last June).

The two parties also cited the progression of the UN and the OAU good offices for the peaceful settlement of the Western Sahara conflict. Bessaieh also cited relations Maghreb-EEC and examined the evolution of the Palestinian issue in the light of the intifədah in the occupied territories and works of the UN General Assembly in Geneva and on the starting of a Palestinian-American political dialogue.

On his part, Andreotti said interest of his government for the current reforms in Algeria and about the positive evolution of the inter-Maghrebin relations.

Concerning the bilateral relations, he expressed satisfaction about the achievements of cooperation between the two countries and possibilities of development.

Andreotti also expressed attachment of Italy to stability in the Mediterranean basin and to dialogue as means of improvement of such a stability.

The Italian foreign minister also cited international developments of the Palestinian issue and progress of the European edification.

It is worth recalling that Giulio Andreotti arrived Tuesday in Algiers for three-day official visit in Algeria.

In a short declaration to the press Andreotti said that his visit is aimed at strengthening bilateral cooperation and exchanging points of view on the international political situation.

Answering a question on the dialogue between the USA and PLO Andreotti pointed out in substance that Italy is in favour of dialogue precising that "it is necessary to dialogue with those (PLO) who are considered the legitimate representative by the Palestinian people".

During his stay, the Italian head of the diplomacy, will have talks with higher political officials including the head of the government Kasdi Merba.

Comments on Talks

LD2812205188 Rome International Service in Italian 1830 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] The foreign minister's official visit to Algeria is nearly over. Our correspondent Rodolfo Fiorilla reports from Algeria:

[Fiorilla] Andreotti is satisfied with this visit which, apart from relaunching the process of bilateral cooperation in the political and economic fields, is taking place at a time of renewed and more intense diplomatic moves concerning the Middle East crisis. The start of a process of detente between Algeria and Morocco also contributes to the opening up of new prospects in the framework of the great Maghreb market.

On this point, without forgetting the role played by Italy in supporting peace and stability in the Mediterranean, the Italian foreign minister said:

[Begin Andreotti recording] On a general level, this clearing up policy throughout the whole regions through closer cooperation between Maghreb countries via the reestablishment of good relations with Libya, and the prospect of having more intense relations with the European countries on the other side of the sea in order to draw up common programs, this is all moving in the right direction. [end recording]

[Fiorilla] As to the Algerian Government's actions which are indispensable between the Arab moderate and radical front, Libya and Syria in particular, Andreotti said that he has received confirmation that the assurances given a month ago by the Algerian President Chadli Bendjedid on the PLO's unity are more than applicable.

The Israeli side, however, must lift some conditions that preclude dialogue, the first being that excluding the PLO's representatives from the Palestinian talking partners.

Egypt

Al-Baz Discusses Mubarak Visit, Peace Process

NC2812191088 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1806 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 28 Dec (MENA)—Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, has asserted that Egypt shows the greatest interest in any negotiations with all parties without exception, including the PLO and Israel, to reach a peaceful settlement based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, without preconditions.

He said: If we reach an accord in this respect within the framework of an international peace conference, which has received international approval as the best way to solve the problem, we can expect President Husni Mubarak's visit to Israel to take place.

In a news conference this evening, Dr al-Baz said that Egypt has no objection to holding consultations with any party to achieve peace, and that Israel is no exception. At the same time, he pointed out that Egypt does not believe in the benefit of ceremonial meetings among heads of state and senior officials; rather it believes that such meetings should produce positive results so that they do not have a negative effect on the peace process.

He added: Proceeding from this viewpoint, we believe that it is necessary to ensure that President Mubarak's visit and meetings with the Israeli prime minister and other leaders will yield fruitful results and lead to tangible steps on the road to peace.

Al-Baz said that it is not in the interests of the parties to the conflict to hold meetings, the objective of which is to discuss certain points, without any guarantee that there would be tangible results promoting the prospects for peace in the Middle East.

Al-Baz stated that there is a need to seize this historic opportunity and achieve meaningful progress in the coming year.

In reply to a question on Egypt's moves following the start of the dialogue between the United States and the PLO, Dr al-Baz said that the PLO has offered all it was able to offer. It has adopted a positive stand. It accepted UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, without reservations. It also recognized Israel's right to exist and stated its rejection of all forms of terrorism.

Al-Baz said that it is now Israel's turn to take a similar stand and allow negotiations to begin with the PLO and the other parties, in accordance with the UN resolutions and within the framework of an international conference for Middle East peace.

He asserted that Israel should accommodate itself to and coexist with a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel must also stop all acts of oppression. Al-Baz stated that Israel's position is negative and obstructs the peace process.

Dr al-Baz said that Israel's claim that the PLO's position is not sincere or sufficient does not serve the cause of peace. He said he hoped that this position would change in the coming few months. He noted that there is an encouraging sign represented in increasing world support for the peace efforts, particularly by parties which in the past completely supported Israel's position.

He stated: We also were pleased by the positive reactions of the United States, the European countries, and others which in the past had doubts about the legitimacy of the Palestinian position. He added that the support which the Palestinian position has received in the West during the past few weeks has proved to be a new asset in the peace efforts. This will encourage the Palestinians to continue the moderate line they are pursuing now.

He noted that Israel is aiming to divert the world's attention from the real issues and to give a false impression that there is a new Israeli position. He affirmed that Israel's talk about the outdated issue of autonomy and the idea of holding elections in the West Bank and Gaza Strip does not serve the cause of peace.

He said: We see no reason to hold elections in order to create a body that represents the Palestinians, since there is already a body that represents them. No one can dictate to the Palestinians who should represent them.

Asked whether he did indeed travel to Syria and meet with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, Dr al-Baz said that he did not go to Syria and has not met with any Syrian official for several years. He explained that no direct contact has taken place between Egyptian and Syrian officials in the past few years.

He noted, however, that there were third parties who have volunteered to make efforts to improve relations among the various Arab states, including Egypt and Syria. However, he added, this was not done at Egypt's request.

Dr al-Baz affirmed that Egypt has no objection to the improvement of relations with Syria, which is a fraternal Arab state. Nevertheless, Egypt does not accept any conditions to improve its relations with any state, Arab or non-Arab.

Asked what Egypt expects from the new U.S. Administration of George Bush, Dr al-Baz declared: It is too early to say. However, what we know about President Bush makes us tend to believe that the new U.S. Administration will concentrate on the important major international issues, and that the Middle East will receive a good share of the new U.S. Administration's attention.

He said that President Ronald Reagan's administration devoted much attention to the Middle East situation. President Bush's administration will have a better chance because it will pick up where the Reagan administration left off—that is, the dialogue with the Palestinians. He noted that President Mubarak had met with George Bush several times when the latter was vice president and when he visited Cairo.

Dr al-Baz said: We hope that the new U.S. Administration will place the Middle East peace process among its priorities.

In reply to a question on the USSR stand on the Middle East issue, Al-Baz said that the USSR position is positive and constructive. The Soviet Union has clearly announced that it is interested in encouraging the parties concerned to reach a settlement of the conflict in the Middle East and to initiate preparations for an international peace conference.

Al-Baz declared that the statements made by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and senior Soviet officials have been very positive.

He added: We believe that the United States and other Western nations are convinced that Soviet participation in negotiations held within the framework of an international conference will be a positive factor for the achievement of peace and reconciliation.

Asked whether Egypt hopes that the Bush administration will engage in any specific moves or initiatives, Al-Baz said: I hope that the United States will pursue the dialogue which it began with the PLO to find more about the Palestinian position and to encourage the Palestinians to retain their moderation and their hope. We would also like the United States to persuade Israel to be more responsive and to act as positively as the PLO.

Furthermore, we expect the Bush administration to give priority to the Middle East in its contacts both with its allies in the West and with the Soviet Union. The United States should also play a positive role in the preparatory talks which will take place among the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and with other parties.

Dr al-Baz stated that Egypt will step up its consultations with all the parties concerned within the next few weeks, including Arab parties, Israel, the United States, the PRC, France, and the UK. Egypt will also get in touch with African and nonaligned nations who have taken positions in support of the peace process.

Al-Baz expressed his hope that the Bush administration would be cooperative in this regard.

He said: We are not asking for a lopsided U.S. stand, and we are not asking the United States to foresake Israel. We are not trying to drive a wedge between the United States and Israel, nor are we trying to isolate Israel. Our sole interest is in the peace process and we are trying to use the U.S. relationship with Israel for the purpose of peace.

Al-Baz was asked whether he had held talks with Saudi [as received] officials during the recent visit to Saudi Arabia by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

He replied that he has not conducted any talks with any Syrian official and that he merely made a stopover in Jeddah on his way to Bahrain at a time when President al-Asad was in Riyadh.

Al-Baz said that if he were to meet with a Syrian official this would not be kept secret. News of the meeting would be made public, he stated.

Al-Baz declared that Syria is an important party to the peace process. He recalled that Syria had once agreed to participate in a Geneva conference but changed its mind at the last moment. Syria, he added, also agrees to enter into comprehensive peace talks as part of an international peace conference.

Al-Baz noted, however, that Syria had not actively participated in any consultations and had not taken any steps to facilitate the convocation of an international conference. He added that if Syria chooses to stay away, this situation should not cause a delay in convening the conference.

Al-Baz emphasized that the primary parties to the conflict are the PLO and Israel. The other parties—Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon—rank second, even though Syria is considered a basic party as part of its territory is still under Israeli occupation.

He pointed out that Egypt welcomes any improvement in relations with Syria as long as the Syrians do not impose conditions and demands. He reaffirmed that Egypt has not asked any third party, either Arab or non-Arab, to work to improve these relations.

He noted that Egypt seeks to create a better atmosphere within the Arab world to achieve a greater degree of solidarity amongst Arab countries and enhance the peace opportunities in the Middle East, because Egypt's fundamental goal is to achieve peace and stability in the region.

Al-Baz disclosed that President Mubarak is expected to visit the United States during the first half of next year, after U.S. President-elect George Bush has taken office as President of the United States.

In light of the contacts and consultations with fraternal Arab countries, he said, an Arab summit conference can be expected to be held in the next few months, specifically the next 2 or 3 months. He remarked that there are indications that this summit conference will be held during this period and that it is most likely to be held in Riyadh as a regular Arab League session.

On Egypt's position toward the recent tension between the United States and Libya regarding a chemical plant, Al-Baz said that naturally Egypt becomes anxious when any Arab state is exposed to hostile action by any source. He expressed the hope that this matter will be resolved without the use of force by any country, as past experience has proved that such a measure is futile.

Dr al-Baz began his news conference with a statement in which he reviewed local, regional, and international developments. Regarding local developments, Dr al-Baz said that the indications give rise to hope, as economic reform measures have begun to produce results. He said that stability in the Middle East area has been enhanced,

and the Iraq-Iran war has ended, although there is no formal agreement yet. He said that Iraq and Iran will reach an agreement on the important points within the coming weeks.

Regarding the Palestinian issue, he referred to the PNC meeting in Algiers and explained that the new Palestinian position has given rise to hope that peace may be achieved.

He said: We must use and develop this opportunity. He described the U.S. decision to begin a dialogue with the PLO as an important step toward the achievement of peace. He added that the peace process in the Middle East is gaining increased Arab support.

Regarding the situation in Lebanon, he stated: We were hoping that there would be a significant development regarding the situation in Lebanon. He went on to say: We hope that some progress will be made in the coming weeks.

'Abd al-Majid Views U.S.-Palestinian Dialogue

NC2812123388 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1137 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 28 Dec (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has stressed the importance of continuing and enhancing the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue that has recently started, particularly after U.S. President-elect George Bush takes over in January.

He noted that Egypt was the first to call for holding the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue a few months after the eruption of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories, when President Husni Mubarak visited Washington early this year.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid also stressed that Egyptian action is present and required on all fronts. He added that Egypt desires to continue contacts with the United States at all levels, becvause the latter is a full partner in the peace process.

He said that Egyptian contacts with the U.S. side are continuing at the political leadership level and other levels. He also noted that the influential forces in the United States are not centered only in the U.S. Administration, but also in Congress, the press, universities, and other places.

This came during a dialogue between Dr 'Abd al-Majid and members of a committee on Egyptian foreign relations formed by the eighth conference of Egypt in the Year 2000, which began in Cairo this morning. At the start of the session Dr 'Abd al-Majid outlined Egypt's foreign policy.

During his dialogue with the committee members, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid affirmed that the recent PNC resolutions in Algiers have transformed the Palestinian cause. He noted that the PNC meetings were preceded by intensive meetings in Cairo.

He explained that there were successive developments following the PNC meeting. PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat delivered his speech at the UN General Assembly in Geneva and then a U.S.-Palestinian dialogue began.

Answering a question about Egyptian-UK relations, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that there is now greater understanding between Egypt and the UK. He affirmed that Egypt has always been eager for the UK and the EC countries to make a contribution toward a solution of the Arab issues.

He described the UK's vote in favor of an international conference for peace in the Middle East during the UN General Assembly's meeting in Geneva on a 15 December as a significant development. [passage omitted]

Regarding Egypt's relations with Syria and Libya, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said: There is no disagreement between us and Libya or Syria that justifies allowing the hostility to continue. He added that the media campaigns have been suspended by Egypt. Each country can maintain its own viewpoint. He affirmed in this regard that Egypt does not accept the imposition of any policy on it.

Regarding the Egyptian prisoners in Iran, Dr 'Abd al-Majid stated that Egypt had asked the International Red Cross to make a formal approach to the Iranian Government for the return of the prisoners, but the Iranian Government had refused.

A new development then took place when Iran handed over 16 Egyptian fishermen who used to work in Kuwait to the Italian Embassy, which takes care of Egyptian interests in Iran. He described this as a positive gesture.

Regarding Egypt's position on the Afghan issue, Dr 'Abd al-Majid declared: We have welcomed the Soviet position regarding withdrawal from Afghanistan. There is a link between us and the Afghan mujahidin because they are defending their rights, he added.

Regarding human rights in Egypt, Dr 'Abd al-Majid affirmed at the conclusion of the dialogue that human rights and liberties are fully guaranteed in Egypt. Opposition exists there, he stated. He said: If some are referring to the emergency law, this is an exception to protect security and stability in this country, which, indeed, is enjoying security and stability.

In a speech which he delivered at the beginning of his meeting with the members of the Foreign Relations Committee formed by the conference on Egypt in the year 2000, Dr 'Abd al-Majid asserted that Egypt's view of peace in the region is based on the idea that peace is

indivisible. He noted that the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty does not represent the end. Efforts must be made to achieve a comprehensive and just peace for all the peoples of the region, without exception.

He said that the extension of the framework of a just and comprehensive peace and increased conviction in it are liable to establish a firm basis for stability in the region. Absolute security for one party means the absence of security for the other parties, he stated.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid expressed his conviction that peace will ultimately triumph in Israel. He explained that no people or government in the world can continue for ever to reject genuine, sincere, and serious peace calls and offers as expressed in the recent Palestinian positions.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the attainment of stability will enable us and all the peoples of the area to face the real challenge—the challenge of comprehensive development.

In his speech, Dr 'Abd al-Majid explained that Egypt's foreign policy strives to achieve three main goals; namely, peace, stability, and development.

He said that Egypt's peace program is based on a number of principles and tenets, but above all it is a civilized course that conforms with the present-day tendency to rule out war as a means of solving conflicts. It also represents a sound assessment of the relations between regional forces and the impact of world detente on these relations.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid emphasized that the call for adhering to peace as a national demand does not conflict with the strengthening of our national security. He indicated that the development of the Egyptian Armed Forces provides the fence that protects our development, as well as peace achievements.

He said that the course of peace which we have adopted as a national demand has proved its worth in the past 10 years. We have recovered our occupied lands, including Tabah, he stated. He asserted that Egypt's handling of the Tabah issue illustrates the strength of national steadfastness. It is a symbol of the sanctity of Egyptian soil and a good example of crisis management, he declared.

Referring to Egypt's pan-Arab role, Dr 'Abd al-Majid explained that Egypt has played its Arab role effectively and realistically, producing positive and concrete results. He cited as an example Egypt's support for Iraq, the strengthening of Palestinian-Jordanian solidarity, the fact that the Palestinian cause has moved to an advanced political stage, and the reactivation of Palestinian-U.S. dialogue.

In this respect, he noted that thanks to President Mubarak's instructions Egyptian-Arab relations have risen to the highest level of strength and mutual confidence. He said: We are striving to ensure that Egypt's Arab role is in line with our national duties and the requirements for protecting our national and economic interests.

Regarding Egyptian-Sudanese relations, Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that despite all the changing circumstances, Egypt's policy has a consistent aim, namely, to safeguard Sudan's security and territorial integrity, to deepen relations between the two parts of the Nile Valley, to continue efforts to calm Sudan's relations with neighboring countries, and to solve the problem of southern Sudan by peaceful means.

Dr 'Abd al-Majidd also stated that Egypt pays special attention to Africa, especially the Nile Basin countries, in view of the inter-relatioship of Egyptian-African security, water, and economic interests.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid asserted that Egypt's foreign policy is based on the establishment of normal relations with all states, be they large or small. Egypt believes in the independence of its political will and in its freedom of movement vis-a-vis both East and West. In this respect, he referred to Egypt's relations with the two superpowers, the EEC states, the nonaligned couantries, and the Asian and Latin American states.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that Egyptian-U.S. relations are built on a strong foundation. We are working hard to develop these relations through our joint efforts, in view of their strategic importance for Egypt's economic and security interests. He added that we are striving to employ these good political relations in the service of our pan-Arab causes.

In this respect, he referred to the contacts which President Mubarak held recently with the United States to strengthen the chances of Palestinian-U.S. dialogue and to push the peace efforts in the region forward.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid said that Egypt is also striving to develop its relations with the Soviet Union, out of its desire to maintain a certain equilibrium in its external relations and to promote Egyptian national and economic interests to the full.

He also referred to Egypt's efforts to strengthen its relations with the European Community, which is working to set up a unified market in 1992.

Abu Ghazalah Says 'No Change' in Strategy

NC2812120088 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1110 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Cairo, 28 Dec (MENA)—Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu Ghazalah, deputy prime minister and minister of defense and war production, stressed that there will be no change in Egyptian strategy

during the coming stage. He noted that Egypt is studying all the changes taking place around it in the region, particularly after the introduction of surface-to-surface missiles and satellites to the area.

In statements he made today after attending the graduation of a new class from the National Defense Academy at the Nasir Higher Military College, Field Marshal Abu Ghazalah expressed the hope that the attempts to reduce tension at the various international and regional levels will continue.

The commander in chief of the Armed Forces said that Egypt has recently obtained drones, which are now in service with the Air Force.

He added that the first batch of U.S. M1A1 tanks will arrive in Egypt and will enter operation in 1989. He added that the manufacturing of these tanks in Egypt will start in 1990.

Abu Ghazalah noted that national security and strategy are not the tasks of the military alone and that all the efforts of the military and the civilians should rally to create a clear and single concept and to work within a single framework to serve Egypt and its future.

Abu Ghazalah also said that the Armed Forces are currently setting up a crisis management center to confront all the crises that the country might face internally and externally. He added that the center will be opened next year. He noted that this center's cadres could be civilian and military graduates from the National Defense Academy at the Nasir Higher Military College. [passage omitted]

U.S. Military 'Threats' Against Libya Rejected

NC2512071588 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0625 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 25 Dec (MENA)—AL-AKHBAR newspaper rejects the thinly veiled threats by U.S. President Ronald Reagan and President-elect George Bush to use military action against what is thought to be a chemical weapons factory in Libya.

Commenting on these threats in today's issue, the paper makes the following observations with regard to the U.S. position:

First: Reports on the incredible efforts exerted and the enormous funds spent by Israel to produce nuclear bombs, for reasons known to everyone are no longer secret. Tel Aviv leaders themselves make a point of leaking news on this activity by all means and do not attempt to deny it clearly.

The paper asks: Why has the United States not displayed the same enthusiasm in condemning this Israeli activity, which involves a domain far more dangerous than chemical warfare?

Second: The United States announced a few months ago that it had started producing advanced types of chemical weapons, thus adding more modern weapons to its arsenal, contrary to the international conventions prohibiting the possession and use of such weapons.

Third: The role of the world policeman, who alone threatens to use its military power against any country on the surface of the earth, thus ignoring the international organizations and institutions with laws that govern the issue of international peace and security and which oppose aggression against any of their member states.

The paper emphasizes that it is not defending Al-Qadhdhafi or his follies, but is merely asking what the secret is behind the U.S. officials' enthusiasm whenever the matter concerns an Arab country, while such enthusiasm disappears in the face of Israel's violations of international laws and norms.

The paper notes in this respect Egypt's official and declared stand in opposition to chemical and nuclear weapons and all weapons capable of causing total destruction, particularly in such sensitive areas as the Middle East.

PLO Executive Committee Members Arrive in Cairo

NC2712114888 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1125 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—PLO Executive Committee members 'Abdallah Hurani and Mahmud Darwish arrived in Cairo from Baghdad this morning. They had attended the PLO Executive Committee meetings which were concluded in Baghdad yesterday.

People's Assembly Committee Urges Israeli Move

NC2612134088 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 26 Dec 88

[Text] The Arab Affairs Committee of the People's Assembly convened today under Committee Chairman Dr Muhammad Hasan al-Zayyat. The committee members welcomed the recent developments in the Arab arena as initiated by the Palestinians and the Palestinians' moves toward peace.

They expressed the hope that Israel will accept the Palestinian peace initiative and press forward to achieve peace in the Middle East. The committee members also welcomed the start of the U.S.-PLO dialogue, which is regarded as an important step in the serious peace efforts. They hoped the two superpowers would pressure Israel to respond to the peace calls and that a UN-sponsored international peace conference would be held.

Israeli Stand on Peace, PLO Criticized

NC2912112388 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0700 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 29 Dec (MENA)—In today's editions, the Cairo newspapers denounce Yitzhaq Shamir's exposed attempts and maneuvers to emerge from the impasse following the latest Palestinian resolutions and the sweeping international support for them.

Under the headline "exposed attempts at deception and misleading," AL-AKHBAR states that Tel Aviv will resort to all the means of deception it has in an attempt to mislead world public opinion by demonstrating its false desire to achieve peace in the Middle East.

The paper points out that the first deceptive attempt came in the form of a plan proposed by Shamir to hold elections in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip to grant Palestinians an imaginary limited autonomy under continuing Israeli occupation. The paper asserts that this is an exposed maneuver to absorb the shock generated by the decision to declare an independent Palestinian state.

AL-AKHBAR notes that the goal of the Israeli Government behind these suspect attempts is to occupy world public opinion with these maneuvers to diminish the international community's pressure on Israel to accept an international peace conference and, also, to put a smokescreen before the Palestinian issue and the gains it has made, or, at least to mark time so Israel can emerge from its deep predicament.

Meanwhile, in its commentary, AL-AHRAM casts doubt on the new Israeli initiative to hold elections in the occupied land and establish autonomy. The paper says that Israel's goal remains the same, that is, to keep the occupied land under actual control and to separate it from its external leadership while deluding the world into believing that there is an Israeli move in the right direction.

Al-AHRAM says that Israel's rejection of the U.S. mediation attempt and its fierce campaign against the U.S. decision to hold a dialogue with the PLO demonstrates Israel's intentions despite all its claims about readiness for peace and for making initiatives to achieve it. The reasons behind this are that Israel is determined to continue its occupation of the land by force and is unwilling to hold negotiations on equal basis, because this entails ceding the occupied territory.

The paper points out that rejection has become a firm and basic principle in Israeli policy regarding the peace process in the Middle East. The Israeli "no's" increased to the point that suggests that Israel wants to close all the doors that the whole world is struggling to open to address the substance of this chronic issue.

AL-AHRAM notes that no sooner had the new Israeli Government assumed power than it added a new "no" to Israel's accumulation at a time when it was hoped Israel would embark on a courageous step to extricate its policy from the quagmire, give rise to hope, and at least respond to the peace calls and proposals.

AL-AHRAM goes on to say that after the three famed Israeli noes—"No to a Palestinian state, No to the PLO, and No to the uprising—Shamir declared another no" to the U.S. mediation efforts to hold a dialogue with the PLO.

AL-AHRAM emphasizes that goodwill alone should have prompted Israel to tacitly encourage this dialogue as long as it was not participating in it. If the dialogue continues, Israel can find out through its close ties with Washington the extent to which the PLO can go following its bold step in recognizing Israel's secure existence and subsequently know the conditions for later negotiations.

Continued U.S. dialogue with the PLO would also enable Israel to convey unofficially through the United States its views to the PLO. But the new Israeli rejection only means that Tel Aviv fears the international momentum toward establishing a just and fair peace.

Commentary Criticizes Israeli Peace Initiative

NC2812163588 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1240 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Ibrahim Wahbih commentary: "An Israeli Maneuver, Not an Israeli Initiative"]

[Text] Israeli Prime Minister Shamir says he intends to launch a new initiative on the Palestinian issue. In return, he has asked for a halt to the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue.

Israeli officials realize that putting forward an initiative is not an objective in itself. There have been more than 20 European, Arab, and U.S. initiatives so far, none of which Israel has accepted. Therefore, a new Israeli initiative at this particular time, when the Palestinian issue has leapt to the top of the list of priorities in the international arena, can only mean that Israel is aware of immense international pressure.

This awareness has prompted it to form a national unity government in order, as Shamir himself has said, to resist international pressure and to confront the international welcome of the Palestinian viewpoint. The Israeli Government's launching of a new initiative at this time reveals a plan to attempt to dilute the situation, disperse world concentration on the Palestinian cause, and freeze the international community's welcome of the Palestinian stand.

The two parties constituting the national unity government in Israel have recently reiterated their declaration that they will not negotiate with the PLO or accept the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. In its attempt to harm the Palestinians and their demands, at a

time when the voice of peace is raised high in international quarters, the national unity government has decided to build eight new settlements in the occupied territories.

It has also announced that it will pursue its policy of violence to quell the Palestinian uprising, although Israel realizes that this is impossible. If this is the declared position of the Israeli Government's two parties, Likud and Labor, now, what new initiative by Israel could be of any use? We can tell from the Israeli prime minister's statements what kind of initiative Israel will try to set forth out of its belief that through this initiative it can distract world public opinion and international political circles.

As expected, the initiative is merely a repeat of the tale of autonomy for the population. That is to say, the territories are to remain occupied and the Palestinian residents are to be given self-rule and a provisional government through elections in the occupied land. This initiative has frequently been propounded whenever Israel has found itself with its back against the wall. Israeli officials have been quoted as saying that there are Palestinians but there is no Palestine.

It was said that there could be a confederation with Jordan. Then it was said that the initiative accepts autonomy for the Palestinians, while keeping the land under Israeli rule, and that autonomy will follow negotiations with a non-PLO party and will end with the holding of elections in the West Bank with a view to setting up a provisional government.

In fact, peace requires Israel to initiate recognition of the PLO. Israel must also accept UN Security Council Resolutions 181 of 1947, 242 of 1967, and 338 of 1973, as did the PLO, if any initiative in this respect is to achieve a minimal degree of legitimacy which would guarantee its sucess.

However, Israel has instead turned to fighting against the success of the Palestinian cause in the international arena and has dispatched its envoys to all parts of the world in an attempt to hamper or distort the success of the PLO.

AL-AKHBAR Assails Shamir's 'Megalomania'

JN2312193188 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 21 Dec 88 p 5

[Editorial: "A Strange Welcome for the Olive Branch"]

[Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has responded to the olive branch brandished by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat using the only language he knows and believes in. He ordered his troops to kill and wound the largest possible number of sons of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories whenever they chant, repeating the name of Yasir 'Arafat, or raise the flag of the independent Palestinian state.

It seems that Shamir has become the reincarnation of the legendary hero Samson and thus seeks to bring down the temple on the heads of all, whether friend or foe, by adamantly lending deaf ears to any peace calls. He has chosen to ignore any hand extended to Israel to help end the vicious circle of violence and aggression that has plagued the Middle East.

He has exceeded proper bounds by rejecting the advice of his only allies and the Jewish American groups on initiating a dialogue with the PLO to reach an acceptable formula for peaceful coexistence among all parties.

Perhaps the Likud leader's strangest response to the peace call, which the entire world has welcomed while lauding the courage of its initiators, is his announcement that Shim'on Peres, the Labor Party leader and his partner in the coalition government, has endorsed the establishment of new eight settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories over a 1-year period at a time when the whole universe is talking about convening the international conference, which is supposed to terminate the Israeli occupation of the occupied territories and return them to their rightful owners.

The megalomania plaguing Shamir has allowed the man to harbor the delusion that he, with his short stature, will be able to challenge the entirety of world public opinion and implement all of his objectives through sheer might, contrary to all common sense and logic.

Papers Cited on Future of New Israeli Government

NC2412081688 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0630 GMT 24 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 24 Dec (MENA)—Today's Cairo newspaper commentaries expect the new Israeli government, a coalition between the Likud and Labor, to come under unprecedented and huge domestic and international pressure either to persuade it to join the peace process called for by the PLO and unanimously approved by the international community, or to hold new elections that could bring in a government capable of forging ahead toward peace.

In a commentary entitled "A Time Bomb," AL-JUMHURIYAH says that, although Shamir's new government has won the Knesset's confidence by a large majority, observers believe that this government is sitting on a time bomb, which the very formation of this cabinet has created.

The government is composed of the two largest political groupings in Israel, but each party harbors different views on the main issues, foremost being peace in the Middle East and, more specifically, the principle of exchanging land for peace, something which the Labor party has approved and Likud has rejected.

The paper adds that the new government, which has managed to attract three of the religious parties, will face major problems in its relations with the remaining extremist parties, which insist that they have been fooled by Shamir, and with regard to its ties with Washington, which has started an official dialogue with the PLO.

The paper concludes by saying that many expect a call for new elections that could bring to power a government capable of following the right path toward an international peace conference, unless, of course, a miracle takes place before that and the current government responds to the present golden opportunity to establish a just and comprehensive peace.

In its commentary entitled "The Policy of Failure," AL-AHRAM writes that the formation of the Israeli government has come amid acute divisions within Israel and against a backdrop of a broad front of Jews, particularly American, urging it to negotiate with the PLO and recognize the balanced rights, as this constitutes the sole and safe way for ensuring Israel's future.

The government, the paper continues, will begin its duties in an atmosphere of almost absolute international isolation, after the recent events and developments superseded all the apparent or hidden support that Israel had enjoyed from Washongton with respect to its position toward the Palestinians and their cause.

The paper stresses that Israel's new government is expected to puruse one of two courses: Either it will take further steps in defiance of international opinion, by denying the Palestinians their rights, continuing the repressive acts against the uprising using conventional and nonconventional means, and by setting up more settlements, or it will show some moderation by proposing camouflaged and transitory initiatives to absorb domestic and foreign anger.

In either case, the paper adds, the Israeli Government is bound to come up against two facts it insists on ignoring. The first is that the uprising will neither abate now stop unilaterally, because its object is to end occupation, reach self-determination, and establish a Palestinian state. The second fact is that the political struggle abroad, which is complementary to the heroic struggle at home, also will not abate, particularly in view of the increasing international support it is now enjoying.

In conclusion, the paper notes that no matter what domestic alliances the Israelis may form at home, they will not be able to achieve anything because these alliances cannot survive under such policies and as long as they remain indifferent to facts.

Readmittance to Arab Labor Organization Welcomed
NC2712153088 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1433 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—Manpower Minister 'Asim 'Abd al-Haq has welcomed a resolution by the Arab Labor Organization's board of directors terminating the suspension of Egypt's membership and inviting Egypt to attend the organization's general conference due to open in (?Morocco) in March.

In a statement to MENA, he said that Egypt thanks the representatives of the member countries who helped pass this resolution with a view to returning the situation to normal.

The minister affirmed that Egypt will participate in the March conference with a high-level delegation, comprising government officials, businessmen, and labor federation representatives, in support of the organization's efforts to serve the workers of the Arab nation.

Libya

Valente Girls Arrive in Benghazi From Lebanon
NC2912122888 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1050 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Tripoli, 29 Dec (JANA)—JANA has learned that in response to an appeal by the brother leader of the revolution on the occasion of Christmas regarding the release of kidnapped hostages in Lebanon, the two French children Marie-Laure and Virginie [Valente] have been released.

JANA has learned that the French girls have arrived in Benghazi and that measures were taken today to hand them over to the French Government envoy and relatives.

Basic People's Congresses Denounce U.S. 'Threats'
LD2912150888 Tripoli JANA in English 1435 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Tripoli, Al Kanun [December] 29, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—The basic people's congresses in a number of municipalities in Great Al-Jamahiriyah continued yesterday for the third day running their sessions to discuss U.S. threats against Great Al-Jamahiriyah.

These masses have denounced all U.S. terrorist threats aginst the Libyan Arab people reaffirming their readiness to defend their achievements, the Great Al Fatih revolutions under the leadership of brotherly [as received] Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

These masses have lauded the supportive stances alongside Great Al-Jamahiriyah assumed by the Arab League and other friendly countries.

These masses have reiterated their commitment to propogate the thoughts of the third universal theory and defend their civilized achievements, apart from supporting all the peoples worldwide to achieve freedom and liberation from the hegemony of imperialism and colonialization.

Al-Qadhdhafi Receives Syria's Khaddam

LD2812204988 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1940 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tripoli, 28 Dec (JANA)—The brother leader of the revolution has received brother 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, vice-president of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Brother 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam reiterated that Syria will stand by the people of the Jamahiriyah and repeated his country's strong condemnation of the U.S. terrorist threats against the Libyan Arab people.

Brother 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam arrived in Tripoli this morning and was met by Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Jallud.

Khaddam Leaves Tripoli

LD2812205088 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1940 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tripoli, 28 Dec (JANA)—Brother 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, vice president of the Syrian Arab Republic, left Tripoli this evening. He was seen off at the Tripoli International Airport by Staff Major 'Abd al-Salam Ahmad Jallud.

Brother 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam reiterated that Syria will stand by the side of the Great Jamahiriyah against any aggression to which the latter might be exposed.

In a statement to JANA before his departure, he said that Syria would always remain by the side of the sisterly Great Jamahiriyah in confronting the dangers threatening it.

Sudan

Workers Protest Government Economic Measures

Mass Demonstrations Continue

LD2912111288 Khartoum SUNA in English 1038 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Khartoum, Dec 29 (SUNA)—Mass demonstrations have been continuing for the third day running in protest to the economic measures adopted by the government this week.

The demonstrators who took to the streets since early this morning have been, peaceful but powerful, chanting against the economic measures and calling for the cancellation of the recent prices rises.

Telecommunications employees, engineers, workers unions and trade unions have stopped work the country over. Government offices are deserted since ten o'clock Sudan local time. The general strike is to continue until the government renounces the new price hikes, according to the several written statements by the various unions and trade unions.

Cabinet Cancels Recent Decisions

LD2912115988 Khartoum SUNA in English 1106 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Khartoum, Dec 20 (SUNA)—The Cabinet today decided the cancellation of all its recent economic measures including the (?mythical) hiking of basic commodities prices.

The Cabinet in a statement today said the government has decided to respond positively to the Sudanese people's will and desire in immediately repealing the recent economic measures and called on the people to go right now to the shops for buying sugar with the old prices.

The Cabinet in its statement said the final decision on the real sources for funding the new increase in salary and wages will be taken after explaining to the public opinion the available options left for funding the new wages scale.

The final decision on this matter will be submitted before the Parliament for its approval and to give the Parliament the opportunity to exercise the accountability, the statement said.

It added that Premier al-Sadiq al-Mahdi wil invite the representatives of the employees and trade unions to have consultations on the available options and then will ask the Parliament's speaker to call on the Parliament for an exceptional session.

The statement [words indistinct] the premier will hold a press conference tomorrow (Friday) to explain the situation.

The Cabinet in the statement appealed to the furious people to stop demonstrations and return to their work immediately.

Meanwhile, bullet shots were heard in some areas of the capital. Khartoum eyewitnesses said police have fired in the air to disperse [word indistinct] citizens who refused to do so despite the Cabinet decision on (?withdrawing) the new prices and its call on people to keep calm.

Demonstrations however continue because the citizens are not able to hear the council's statement due to work stoppage in the national radio of Omdurman.

Police Fire on Demonstrators

LD2912133688 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1010 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Khartoum, 29 Dec (SUNA)—Continual volleys of shots can presently be heard (?approaching) the Council of Ministers headquarters. There has been shooting here, at the headquarters of the agency. It followed the issuing of the Council of Ministers decree on the reversal of the [price] increases. Eyewitnesses said the police fired on demonstrators who had refused to disperse after the

Council of Ministers decree had been read to them. It appears that the demonstrators are demanding further decisions, including decisions on the question of peace and an end to the war.

Government To Respond to 'Demands'

EA2912140288 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1015 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Monitored in progress]

[Text] Dr 'Ali al-Haj Adam [minister of internal trade, cooperation and supply] said in his statement that the Democratic Unionist Party [DUP] had come to the conclusion either that the ship had sunk or was about to sink, which was why the party had taken this position.

Moreover, his excellency said that the Council of Ministers decree adopted today on revoking the recent [price rise] decision was a response to lawful demands from the masses represented by the parliamentary party groups, the trade unions, and a large proportion of the citizens.

The minister went on to say that it was incumbent on the Council of Ministers to revoke its decision in view of the democratic situation and for the government to respond to expressions of democracy and peaceful demonstrations. He said that having revoked its decision, the government had called on the citizens and workers to resume work and step up production.

'Ali al-Haj went on to say that there were political forces, which he did not name, which would like to exploit the current trade union unrest on behalf of political interests opposed to the government and its legitimacy.

(?Elsewhere), Muawiyah 'Abd al-Wahid, member of the Ummah Party's Consultative Council, described the DUP's withdrawal from the government as a political maneuver.

He said that by taking such a position, the DUP wanted to stir up the streets. He said he is calling for the formation of a government today and not tomorrow.

In a statement issued yesterday the DUP announced its withdrawal from the government. In the statement the party demanded the cancellation of the [price] increases and the formation of a government of national reconciliation.

Kuwait

Judicial Agreement Signed With Bulgaria

LD2612131688 Kuwait KUNA in English 1223 GMT 26 Dec 88

[Text] Kuwait, Dec 26 (KUNA)—Kuwait and Bulgaria Monday signed an agreement on judicial cooperation between the two countries.

The agreement was signed by Minister of Justice and Legal Affairs Dari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman and Bulgarian Minister of Justice Mrs. Svetla Daskalova.

The signing ceremony was attended by Kuwait Justice Undersecretary Nasir al-Rumi and Assistant Undersecretary for Legal Affairs and Planning 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Dakhil. The Bulgarian deputy minister and the Bulgarian ambassador to Kuwait were also attending.

'Uthman in a statement on the occasion welcomed the Bulgarian delegation and noted that Kuwait is very keen to ensure justice to everyone living here whether a Kuwaiti citizen or an expatriate.

He added that the signing of the agreement between the two countries not only strengthens judicial relations but will also realize justice in its human dimension through exchanging prisoners, thus allowing them to spend their sentence close to their families.

The Bulgarian minister, for her part, confirmed the friendly cooperation relations between the two countries in the legal field, noting that the agreement will facilitate implementing of the judicial sentences and will lessen the crimes and boost the cooperation in crime prevention.

Saudi Arabia

Riyadh PLO Office Gains Embassy Status

LD2812130788 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1118 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Riyadh, 28 Dec (SPA)—The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has decided to regard the PLO office in Riyadh as the Embassy of Palestine in Riyadh and to regard the PLO representative as ambassador of Palestine to the Kingdom.

This decision is contained in a Foreign Ministry statement, the text of which is as follows:

The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia already issued a statement on 15 December 1988 voicing support for the PNC decision on the proclamation of an independent Palestinian state. The Kingdom indicated its full recognition of the Palestinian state.

Stemming from this, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has decided to regard the PLO office in Riyadh as an Embassy of Palestine to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as from Sunday, 1 January 1989, and to regard the PLO representative to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as ambassador of the State of Palestine to the Kingdom.

Yemen Arab Republic

Foreign Minister Receives Iraqi Official

JN2712135588 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] Brother Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and member of the Standing Committee, this morning received brother Wisam al-Zahawi, Iraqi Foreign Ministry first under secretary, who conveyed to Al-Iryani a message from his brother Tariq 'Aziz, Iraqi deputy prime minister and foreign minister, dealing with relations between the two fraternal countries.

They also discussed coordination and consultations concerning the international conferences scheduled to be held at the beginning of next year.

The meeting was attended by brother Ahmad Muhammad al-Iryani, YAR Foreign Ministry under secretary, and brother 'Abd al-Hysayn al-Rifa'i, the Iraqi ambassador in Sanaa.

Iraqi Official Departs

JN2712175288 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] Brother Wisam al-Zahawi, Iraqi Foreign Ministry under secretary, left Sanaa this afternoon after a short visit to our country during which he held talks with Foreign Ministry officials on relations between the two fraternal countries as well as issues of common interest.

He was seen off by brother Ahmad Muhammad al-Iryani, Foreign Ministry under secretary, a number of Foreign Ministry officials, and 'Abd al-Husayn al-Rifa'i, the Iraqi ambassador in Sanaa.

Oil Minister, Delegation Leave for Ankara 28 Dec
JN2812113288 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0910 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 28 Dec (INA)—Oil Minister 'Isam 'Abd al-Rahim al-Jalabi left for Ankara today heading a technical delegation on a visit of several days to Turkey.

The minister, who is also the head of the Iraqi side to the Turkish-Iraqi joint committee for economic, scientific, and technical cooperation, will hold talks with the head of the Turkish side and with the irrigation, energy, and trade ministers to prepare for the meetings of the committee's next session, which will be held in Ankara in March.

The Iraqi technical delegation accompanying the oil minister includes representatives of the Ministries of Trade, Oil, Industry, Military Industrialization, and Finance and of the Central Bank.

Labor Minister Returns From Morocco, Egypt
JN2612195288 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1907 GMT 26 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 26 Dec (INA)—Labor and Social Affairs Minister Bakr Mahmud Rasul returned to Baghdad at the end of visits to Morocco and Egypt lasting several days. [passage omitted]

AL-JUMHURIYAH Cited on Call for Arab Dialogue
JN2612111688 Baghdad INA in English 1015 GMT 26 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 26, INA—AL-JUMHURIYAH daily of Baghdad said that a dialogue among Arab countries would be a significant factor for improving and regulating brotherly relations and encountering any gap in the path of Arab relations.

A daily editorial here today said that Iraq was and still is adopting, on pan-Arab level, clear and firm stand based on Arab solidarity and deepening principles and bases of cooperation among Arab countries.

Iraq also champions understanding that is based on dialogue for creating a state of confidence among Arab brethren.

It affirmed that such attitude was not prompted by certain conditions through which the Arab nation had passed but was a working program and deep belief emanating from faith and commitment that could not change by circumstances.

AL-JUMHURIYAH went on saying that stances of some Arab regimes like that of Syria toward Lebanon, the Palestine cause or the aggressive war launched by Iran against Iraq crystallized necessity of reconsidering principles and bases to be resorted to in the relations among Arab countries.

Iraq had on several occasions referred to these principles and the necessity of non-interference in the domestic affairs and renouncing Arab differences and use of military force between Arab brethren.

These bases would contribute to preventing any foreigner from aggressing upon Arab countries, the daily concluded.

IDF Kills 3 'Terrorists' in South Lebanon

TA2812123488 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Three terrorists were killed before dawn in a clash with an IDF patrol when they tried to infiltrate into Israel from the security zone in southern Lebanon. Our forces did not suffer any casualties.

This morning, an IDF patrol spotted a terrorist squad moving north of Mays al-Jabal, several meters from the border. The patrol opened fire, killing three terrorists.

To repeat, our forces did not suffer any casualties. Kalashnikov assault rifles, antitank missile launchers, ammunition, and barbed wire cutters were found near their bodies.

Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that one of the missiles was ready to be fired, but the terrorists did not have time to operate it. IDF soldiers spotted the terrorists while they were cutting through the border fence.

Major General Yosi Peled, the commander of the Northern Command, said the soldiers operated professionally and efficiently. He said the terrorists are trying to exploit the bad weather to reach the border fence, but the IDF is prepared and is succeeding in stopping them before they reach the border.

Shomron, Peled on Penetration Attempts in North

TA2812165288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 28 Dec 88

[text] Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Dan Shomron has said that the terrorist squad that tried to penetrate Israeli territory via the northern border belongs to (Hama), the popular struggle front. The squad members crossed the security strip at night and were just at the border in the early morning hours.

Speaking to our correspondent Karmela Menashe, Lt Gen Shomron said that in the past year, and in fact over the last few days as well, we have seen Palestinian organizations trying to enter Israel to carry out attacks. The IDF is checking whether there are bodies that assist the terrorist organizations north of the security strip.

If there are such bodies, the chief of staff emphasized, Israel will take action against them.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 28 December reports that the chief of staff said that "the IDF will do everything to defend the northern settlements. This will be done by carrying out operations inside the security strip and raiding targets deep inside territory north of it."]

He also said that the penetration attempts in the north are another manifestation of the uprising in the territories.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1500 carries a brief interview with Gen Shomron, in which he says: "We are not aware of any instruction or actual move whose aim is to end terrorism. On the contrary, the terrorist organizations are preparing for terrorist attacks. I believe that particularly the organizations that call themselves salvation organizations, which oppose 'Arafat's political move, will pursue their method of torpedoing any such eventuality. We believe that they will continue their attempts."]

Major General Yosi Peled, the commander of the Northern Command, told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that the IDF is investigating whether Amal is extending aid to the terrorists. If so, Israel will be forced to take action against that Shi'ite organization.

Air Force Hits North of Security Strip 29 Dec

TA2912075188 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0730 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Following is the IDF spokesman's announcement: This morning IDF assault helicopters attacked a target north of the security strip in Lebanon. The target attacked by the helicopters was the site from which the Palestine Liberation Front squad set out yesterday. The squad members were killed near Ramim on their way to carrying out an attack in Israel.

The target is located north of Kafr Tibnin, north of the security strip, in the area controlled by Amal. This target is used by Amal elements who helped the squad at their own initiative.

IDF To 'Act Firmly' Against Aid to 'Terrorism'

TA2912082588 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] This morning IDF assault helicopters attacked the site from which the Palestine Liberation Front squad set out yesterday. The squad members were killed near Ramim yesterday morning on their way to carrying out an attack in Israel. All our helicopters returned safely. The target attacked is located north of Kafr Tibnin, in the area under Amal's control. This target is used by Amal elements who helped the squad at their own initiative.

IDF sources emphasize that the IDF will continue the policy of maintaining the calm in southern Lebanon and of not harming local elements, including the Amal organization.

At the same time, however, the IDF will act firmly against any element which carries out acts of terrorism against Israel or lends assistance to such activity.

New 'Anti-Missile Missile,' 'Sliding Bomb' Shown

TA2812144288 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 28 Dec 88 p a9

[Report by Mazal Mu'alem]

[Text] "Baraq" is the name given the anti-missile missile manufactured by RAFAEL [armament development authority]. The missile, one of the most efficient of its kind, can "track" the enemy missile in midair and destroy it a short time after it was launched.

The missile was displayed yesterday in an exhibition of sophisticated weapon systems made by RAFAEL. The exhibition was held in the framework of the annual convention of planning and production with the aid of computers.

The exhibition also presents a "sliding bomb" that is guided by television and launched from aircraft. According to the chairman of the convention, Yosi Levi, one of the RAFAEL heads, "as opposed to other bombs that are dropped and fall on the target, this bomb navigates itself toward the target with the help of a computer system."

Products by other companies are also presented at the exhibition, including the Israel Aircraft Industries. The exhibition is being held at the Tel Aviv fairground convention halls and is open to the public until Thursday.

Shamir: Sabotage of Pan Am Plane 'Not Surprising'

TA2912053388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] In Jerusalem, Prime Minister Shamir says he does not know who blew up the Pan Am airliner, but he recalls that the PLO was the first terrorist organization to attack civilian aviation. The prime minister was speaking to reporters after a dinner he hosted for Morris Abram, the outgoing president of the Conference of Presidents in the United States.

Reporter David Essing asked Shamir about his reaction to the news that the airliner had been sabotaged:

[Begin recording] [Shamir] Well, it's not surprising. You know that the PLO was the first organization to organize violent attacks against the civil aviation in many parts of the world, and this outrageous act against the Pan American plane is one of the series of terrorist acts we know. We have to condemn and to fight against it, all the free world together, with the United States as the leader of the free world.

[Essing] Do you have any idea of who might have blown up the plane, sir?

[Shamir] For the moment I don't know, but it's clear that it was done by a terrorist organization and a terrorist organization with an experience in this field. I hope that in the future we'll know more.

[Essing] Mr Shamir, for the second time this week, terrorists have been stopped on the Israeli border. Are we seeing now a deterioration of the situation, a mounting Palestinian campaign on the Lebanese border?

[Shamir] It's a continuation of the permanent attempts of the Palestinian terrorist organizations to penetrate the Galilee and attack and kill some Israeli people. Thanks to our security services, especially to our Army, they don't succeed, and I hope it will be so in the future.

[Essing] Do you think it might be linked to the American decision to begin this dialogue with the PLO?

[Shamir] I don't know if it is linked, but it is a fact that the last American decision about having talks with the PLO has encouraged the tendency of violent acts against Israel.

[Essing] You have received a special message from President Reagan about the American dialogue with the PLO. Has this reassured you? Have you changed your opinion on this move by the Americans?

[Shamir] Well, the message of the President was excellent and it is encouraging, but nevertheless I think that the last act of the U.S. Administration regarding the PLO was not a just step. [end recording]

AL-FAJR Condemns Possible Sabotage in Crash

TA2812172488 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 25 Dec 88 pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "Against Terrorism and for the Protection of Peace"]

[Text] Four days ago, on 21 December, a Pan Am Boeing 747 aircraft en route from Frankfurt to the United States, with 258 people on board, crashed over Lockerbie, Scotland. All those aboard the plane died on the spot.

Observations were made to the effect that this dreadful incident might be a premeditated, subversive terrorist act committed by dark repugnant hands stained with the blood of the innocent.

Moreover, there appeared certain indications to the effect that some of those hiding behind the Palestinian name, who have no relationship at all with either the PLO, or with the Palestinian identity in general, had perpetrated this reprehensible crime.

Before the scientific studies and definite results of the cause of this extremely painful incident are announced, we would like to affirm our absolute condemnation of all forms of terrorism. We refer to the official Palestinian statement in this context, as enunciated in Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's address in Geneva on 13 December, against individual and group terrorism as well as state terrorism.

Should it appear in fact that this incident was a premeditated terrorist act committed by certain individuals who falsely assume the Palestinian name, we cannot but reiterate our total condemnation of terrorism on one hand, and of those who are continuing to cast ugly aspersions on us by their false assumption of the Palestinian name on the other. They are the real terrorists against Palestine, against a comprehensive and just peace in the region, and against all humanity.

Chairman 'Arafat condemned this criminal act even before it has been proved that it was premeditated. He perceived in it an act aimed against peace in the region. 'Arafat said that this requires an acceleration of efforts to counter this terrorism.

One of the friends of our Palestinian people and a lover of peace and humanity, Bernt Carlsson, was killed in this incident, or despicable crime. Also killed with him was a group of innocent people.

We offer our warmest condolences to their relatives through our joint grief for their loss and through our joint insistence, as well, on the necessity to resolutely confront all forms of terrorism everywhere.

Arens To Meet Shultz in Paris 'Next Month'

TA2912054488 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens and U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz are to meet next month in Paris. The meeting was arranged last night for a time when the two men will be in the French capital on a conference on the prevention of chemical warfare.

The conference was initiated by French President Francois Mitterrand and U.S. President Ronald Reagan. Foreign ministers from dozens of countries are expected to attend. It will be the first official trip abroad for Arens since becoming foreign minister in the new government.

Israel has strongly protested against the use of chemical weapons, most notably by Iraq, and against countries that produce the weapons, including Syria and Libya.

Arens, 'Abd al-Majid To Meet During Conference

TA2912093088 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 29 Dec 88 p 1

[Report by political correspondent 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister Moshe Arens will meet with his Egyptian counterpart 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid in 10 days. The two will exchange views on the peace process and the possibility of arranging a meeting between the prime minister and the Egyptian president.

The two will also discuss bilateral relations and may try to reach an understanding on the implementation of the arbitration ruling on Tabah, which should be implemented by the end of next month.

The meeting will be held in Paris, where dozens of foreign ministers from all over the world are to congregate for the UN conference on chemical warfare.

Arens also wants to meet with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Paris. The foreign minister's office has been maintaining contacts to arrange for such a meeting during 1 of the 3 days of the convention, which is scheduled to open on 7 January. [passage omitted]

Shinuy Member Said To Meet PLO Official

TA2412163688 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 24 Dec 88

[Text] Center-Shinuy member Moshe 'Amirav met in Cairo with Zuhdi Labib al-Tarazi, the PLO UN representative, for a discussion under the sponsorship of that international organization.

'Amirav said that only a compromise between Israel and the Palestinians will lead to a peace settlement; also, in his opinion, Israel will open negotiations with the PLO sooner or later. Such negotiations would be accelerated if the PLO honors its promises, particularly with regard to refraining from terrorism.

Al-Tarazi called for the application of international pressure on the Israeli Government to get it to change its positions. The meeting between the two was initiated by a UN information organization located in Cairo.

Meeting To Be 'Investigated'

TA2512092288 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Excerpt] The Prime Minister's Office has reported, in reaction to Moshe 'Amirav's meeting with Labib al-Tarazi in Cairo, that when 'Amirav returns to Israel the matter will be investigated.

If the law was indeed broken by his meeting with PLO members, legal measures will be taken against him.

'Amirav Denies Direct Contact

TA2512183288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Shinuy Party member Moshe 'Amirav has returned from his controversial visit to Egypt and denies he had any direct contact there with the PLO's observer to the United Nations.

The atmosphere in Cairo, 'Amirav says, is that President Mubarak is determined in his latest attempts to advance the peace process. [passage omitted]

Arens Announces Foreign Ministry Appointments
TA2612134488 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Dec 88 p 2

[Report by diplomatic correspondent Menahem Shalev]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] Deputy Foreign Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, whose appointment is to be ratified by the Knesset today, discussed with Arens yesterday his future fields of responsibility in the ministry.

Sources said that Netanyahu might be made directly responsible for U.S.-Israeli relations and for the ministry's information efforts.

Arens has yet to decide on a new director-general for the ministry, but he yesterday appointed three close aides to fill the vacated posts in his own bureau.

Salay Meridor, 33, the youngest brother of Justice Minister Dan Meridor, will serve as Arens's policy adviser, filling the post which Nimrod Novik held under former minister Shim'on Peres. [passage omitted]

Dani Nave, 28, will serve as Arens's media adviser, filling the post held by Uri Savir under Peres. Nave, a lawyer, was Arens's spokesman in the previous government and continued later as spokesman for the Likud.

Ilana Binenstock, who has served as Arens's bureau chief since his 1983 appointment as defense minister, will now hold the same post in the Foreign Ministry.

Ramon Voted Alignment Knesset Faction Chairman
TA2612134188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1300 GMT 26 Dec 88

[Text] Knesset Member [MK] Hayim Ramon was elected chairman of the Alignment faction in the Knesset. Our correspondent Arye Golan reports that 21 faction members supported MK Ramon against 16 who voted for MK David Liba'i. Two Alignment members abstained.

CRM Elects Temkin as New Secretary General
TA2612131488 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Dec 88 p 10

[ITIM Report]

[Text] Tel Aviv—Dr. Beni Temkin was unanimously elected here yesterday by the Citizen's Rights Movement [CRM] council as the party's new secretary-general, replacing MK [Knesset Member] Dedi Zucker, who served in the post from 1981. Temkin, 43, is a lecturer in political science at Tel Aviv university. He was born in Mexico, and, after helping to found the left-wing Sheli party, moved to the CRM in 1984.

Islamic Movement To Run in Municipal Elections
TA2512183088 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1800 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Text] The Islamic Movement among the Israeli Arabs has decided to participate in municipal elections. Members of the movement will run in elections in Nazareth, Umm al-Fahm, and 10 other settlements in Galilee and the Triangle area, all considered strongholds of the HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] Communist Party. The Islamic Movement says participation in municipal elections is its first step in becoming integrated into the political process.

Faysal al-Husayni Supports West Bank Elections
TA2812183288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Faysal al-Husayni, one of the leading PLO supporters in the territories, is in favor of elections in the West Bank. Our correspondent Razi Barqay reports that Al-Husayni, who is under administrative detention in Kfar Yona prison, met today in jail with MAPAM Knesset Member Ya'ir Tzaban whom he told that if the elections are free and detached from the idea of unilateral autonomy, the majority of Palestinians would participate.

Rabin Briefs Knesset Committee on Defense Budget
TA2712133388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] The defense minister said that he would firmly object to any cut in the defense budget. In a meeting with members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, he noted that his ministry has endured cuts that affected the order of battle and hurt the IDF's growth plans substantially.

We instituted an in-depth reform in the military industries, which is why they have not collapsed, he added. Additionally, the defense establishment made great efforts to secure export contracts and signed deals worth more than $2 billion this year alone. It is inconceivable that after such an effort, further cuts would have to be suffered.

Our correspondent Arye Golan reports that on another issue, the defense minister said that Fatah fears a Syrian takeover of the Sidon area. He claimed that an idyll currently prevails between the Phalangists and Iraq, which has supplied them with dozens of tanks.

An increase in stoning incidents and in disruptions of traffic in the territories this month was reported. The army does not have a satisfactory solution to the problem, said Minister Rabin, adding that this bothers him.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1230 GMT on 27 December adds that Rabin said that "the inhabitants of Judaea and Samaria are split over whether to discontinue the uprising or step up terrorism." Thus, "while the communists want to end the uprising and promote a political move because they believe the uprising has achieved its goals," pro-Syrian and anti-'Arafat Hamas—the Islamic Resistance Movement—elements are interested in more terrorism "to torpedo the PLO chief's moves." Rabin reportedly also told the committee members that "another 180 buses will be reinforced" against stonethrowers.]

Rabin Reports 'Uprising' Casualty Toll

TA2812122288 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 28 Dec 88 p 3

[Report by Yoram Bar]

[Excerpt] "The pro-Syrian organizations and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] want to increase terror in order to torpedo 'Arafat's moves, while the communists want to stop the uprising as they believe that the intifadah [uprising] has attained its goals," Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said yesterday in an address to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

According to him, 'Arafat's men are unanimous in their view that the intifadah must be continued, but are debating the means to achieve that end.

"Some of them believe that attacking military personnel is not terrorism, but we must remember that as far as they are concerned, Misgav 'Am and Metulla are military targets," said Rabin. He added that their willingness to continue confrontations despite the difficulties and suffering is a fact.

Rabin reported on the intifadah casualty toll, according to which 320 people have been killed in the territories so far and more than 7,000 have been wounded. Over 21,000 have been detained, of which 5,600 are still held in detention. Of these, 1,200 are under administrative detention.

Rabin claims that stonethrowing constitutes the most difficult problem, because 80 percent of the stonethrowers are children under 14.

Among the steps being taken, Rabin noted protective measures for an additional 180 buses traveling in the territories and the building of roads to bypass trouble spots such as Qalqilyah. [passage omitted]

Bar-Lev: 'Uprising' Will Continue in New Year

TA2812193888 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1830 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Police Affairs Minister Hayim Bar-Lev estimates that the intifadah [uprising] will not end in the upcoming year even if a new political peace initiative is launched. The minister believes such an initiative is certain to be launched.

[Begin Bar-Lev recording] In the upcoming year—and probably beyond—the intifadah will not disappear entirely. I hope and believe that there will be a political move. I am not sure, however, whether the political move that will be made in the upcoming year will restore the situation to what it was before. [end recording]

Soldiers Cleared in Wake of Nabulus Incidents

TA2512180188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Text] The investigating officer who probed the Nabulus events of 10 days ago, in which eight residents were killed, submitted his report today. It said that the soldiers had acted correctly: being in mortal danger, they resorted to measures appropriate to the situation.

Our correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that according to the investigating officer, the events were prompted by the U.S. recognition of the PLO a day earlier, as well as the death of a youth wounded 1 month before the events, who died the night before. These developments heightened the tension in the area.

Incidents, Casualties Reported in Territories

'Violent Clash' in Nabulus

TA2812172288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 28 Dec 88

[text] Two men were killed and three wounded in today's clashes with the security forces in the territories. Samir Muhammad Shahadah was killed by soldiers' gunfire in the Nabulus casbah; Jibril Jabir Hish was killed in the village of Rihiyah, near Hebron. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the IDF is investigating.

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1300 GMT on 28 December reports: "An 18-year-old Arab was killed this morning in the Nabulus casbah in a clash with IDF troops. Army sources have told our correspondent Moti Amir that, judging from preliminary reports, a violent clash occurred between several Arabs and an IDF unit. The injured youth was transferred to a hospital in Nabulus where he died of his wounds. The IDF is investigating the incident."]

In the Ramallah district village of Silwad, two youths who had thrown stones were wounded by IDF fire. In a riot at the Al-Burayj refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, a 13-year-old was wounded by a rubber bullet. He was treated in a hospital and sent home.

3 Hurt in Stoning Near Hebron

TA2812171888 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 28 Dec 88

[text] Three residents of the territories were slightly injured by a stone thrown at bus No 440, the Jerusalem-Beersheba line, just outside Hebron. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that a Qiryat Arba' medical team administered first aid to the wounded. There were several stoning incidents in Judaea and Samaria today. Israeli cars were damaged in Samaria and in the Binyamin district.

Further on 28 Dec Incidents

TA2812195288 Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Two Arab residents of Judaea and Samaria were killed today in the course of clashes with IDF soldiers. The IDF spokesman has added that four locals were injured in incidents today in Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

East Jerusalem Arab reporters have told our correspondent that the number of casualties in the territories today has actually reached 16, among them an 8-year-old boy who was injured in Tulkarm.

There was a general commercial strike in the territories today. [passage omitted]

Curfew Lifted in Gaza Strip

TA2912082888 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Early this morning the IDF lifted the curfew on all the refugee camps and towns in the Gaza Strip, and thousands of workers left for work in Israel. This morning, studies and commerce resumed in all Gaza Strip cities.

12 Arab School Boys Detained

TA2912113288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Jerusalem police this morning arrested 12 pupils of the Shu'fat boys school, north of the city, during a violent disturbance. The pupils threw stones at passing cars and later at the police summoned to restore order.

Yeshiva students from Qiryat Arba' and Hebron are studying Torah on the streets today in protest over the security situation in the area. The protest began last night at two sites where Israeli cars were stoned earlier in the day. [passage omitted]

Civil Administration Denies Punitive Medical Cuts

TA2412183588 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1800 GMT 24 Dec 88

[Text] Knesset Member 'Oded Zucker of the Citizens Rights Movement says that the Civil Administration in Judaea and Samaria has reduced medical services to local Arabs in order to punish them. He says Israeli physicians have reported that hospitalization days for local residents have been reduced to one-fifth of the pre-uprising figure.

The spokesman for the Civil Administration in Judaea and Samaria reacted by saying that there is no policy of punishment by cutting medical services. The cut in services stems from budget problems, he said.

Ambassador Brown Presents Credentials to Herzog

TA2912113688 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Excerpt] The new U.S. ambassador to Israel, William A. Brown, presented his credentials to President Herzog this morning. This is Brown's second appointment in Israel. He previously served as the deputy head in the American Embassy between 1979 and 1982. [passage omitted]

Japan's Takeshita Congratulates Shamir

TA2912114088 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita has sent a message of congratulations to Yitzhaq Shamir on his reappointment as premier. The Japanese leader said he wanted to express his best wishes for Shamir's success and the future development of Israel.

Gorbachev Sends New Year's Greetings to MK Wilner

TA2912090088 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Knesset Member Me'ir Wilner has received a letter containing New Year's greetings from Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. In the letter Gorbachev wishes Wilner a year of successful and fruitful activity.

Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the head of the CPSU Middle East Department also sent a letter of greetings to Wilner.

Medical Officer Returns From Convention in PRC

TA2712055188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] A Medical Corps officer has returned from an international convention in the PRC on gunshot wounds. The exposition presented by the officer, Dr Hana Geva', who is the first Israeli physician to attend an international convention in China, aroused much interest. She was invited to special discussions with groups of participants from the PRC and other countries.

Heroin Smuggling Ring Broken; Leader Arrested

TA2412082488 Tel Aviv THE NATION in English 23 Dec 88 p 3

[Report by Pinhas Talmon]

[Excerpt] A major heroin smuggling ring was broken up yesterday and its leader arrested following months of investigation by police. The ring had been smuggling the drug and making large sales from its base in the Kerem Hateymanim neighborhood in Tel Aviv.

According to police sources, the smashing of the ring prevented plans for a massive shipment of heroin to Israel in the near future. The ring's leader, a 40-year-old man who has been jailed in Israel and Europe for smuggling heroin, operated a central selling station near the Carmel market while other members ran smaller satellite stations nearby. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 20 December reports on page A12 that "Jerusalem police seized 100 units of heroin and detained nine persons suspected of dealing the drugs out of an apartment in the French Hill neighborhood in Jerusalem."]

Israeli 'Manipulations' With Peace Viewed

JN2812120088 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Dec 88 p 1

[Editorial: "A False Step Forward"]

[Text] Within the context of a desperate attempt to get out of its strangulating international isolation and to repair its terrorist Israeli image, which is hostile to right, justice, and peace, Yitzhaq Shamir's Likud government, which is known for its obstinacy and intransigence, is trying to make world public opinion believe that Tel Aviv has a desire for the negotiation and attainment of peace.

Due to the great desperation of the Israeli political logic, the Shamir government could not find any peace plan to present except the Camp David accords, which the Arabs and the Palestinians previously rejected 10 years ago in circumstances much worse than the present ones when the Arab world was divided within itself and unable to respond to a single challenge.

If anything, this desperate logic confirms the deep crisis within Israel and the heavy international pressure on the Israeli Government to present a peace proposal equal to the Palestinian peace initiative, and to stop ignoring the importance of the current regional and international changes in the political scene around Israel.

Therefore, when the Israeli Government tries to revive Camp David, it only seeks to encircle the significant diplomatic gains which the PLO has achieved in recent weeks and to deceive the world about the existence of Israeli peace plans, even when these plans have been dead for many years.

The current Israeli manipulations on the subject of peace are merely a false step forward to avoid facing the requirements of the new political phase through which the region and the whole world are passing. The climate of international detente has expedited the elimination of a number of hotbeds of tension and the settlement of several regional conflicts on all continents. Israel is trying to live outside this new phase and in isolation of its climate which is saturated with the spirit of peace, positiveness, and accord.

Shamir's 'Suspect Proposals' Criticized

JN2912114088 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 29 Dec 88 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Our Stand Against Suspect Proposals Is Firm"]

[Text] As part of his campaign to revive the Camp David accords, Israeli Prime Minister Shamir has expressd his readiness to introduce amendments into these accords so that Jordan could join them, as he claimed.

This strange utterance means that Shamir does not want to learn anything from events throughout the past years, and that he still needs to be reminded of the constants of the Jordanian stand and of the fact that these constants cannot be changed.

Therefore, we say and repeat that Jordan's rejection of the Camp David accords is final and irreversible and that any amendment of these accords will not change the unwavering Jordanian stand toward them, considering them a dead phenomenon that has no chance of revival.

Moreover, we believe that sisterly Egypt will not agree to take part in any such bargaining, particularly since it believes, just like Jordan, the rest of the Arab countries, and the members of the international community, that an international peace conference attended by the UN Security Council's permanent member states and the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the PLO, is the only way to settle that conflict and solve the Palestine question, which is the core of the conflict, in a just and comprehensive way that restores real peace to the region.

In light of this clear fact, Shamir should understand that Jordan's commitment to the international confernce is firm, particularly since it was and still is at the head of those calling for it.

Shamir should also understand that Jordan had previously asserted and is still asserting that it will not in any way be a substitute for the PLO or its representative in the peace process. In order to reinforce this constant position, Jordan dismantled links with the West Bank and this facilitated the PLO's proclamation of the independent Palestinian state.

Thus, Shamir's call for the amendment of the Camp David accords will not attract any Arab party, especially Jordan. On the other hand, we would like to state that Jordan understands its role and does not wait for a role to be defined by Shamir or others.

This is because it was Jordan which has built its pioneering pan-Arab role, represented by supporting the Palestinian people and their glorious uprising and the earnest work to enable these people to regain their usurped land and to enjoy their right to self-determination on their national soil through the aspired international conference.

Jordan's role is also represented in strengthening Arab solidarity and building the intrinsic Arab power so that the Arabs will be qualified to exercise all options and to face various challenges in order to establish a just and comprehenive peace in the region.

Needless to say, this position is characterized by clarity and needs no further explanation. Its pillars are characterized by constancy which does not tolerate any change.

In view of all this, we say that what Shamir is publicizing in an attempt to revive the Camp David march is merely a dream. Jordan, the citadel of steadfastness on the longest confrontation line, adheres to its pan-Arab role and will never be diverted from it regardless of the acrobatic utterances Shamir or others may come up with, and regardless of the suspect alternatives they may propose.

Mubarak Offer To Visit Israel Praised

JN2912122488 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 29-30 Dec 88 p 4

[Editorial: "Israel's Ostrichism"]

[Text] Egypt's President Husni Mubarak may have gambled and lost over his insistence that his proposed visit to Israel be made contingent on Israel's acceptance to engage the PLO in talks leading to an overall settlement of the Palestinian conflict. But this is besides the point.

What is even more relevant is that Cairo is putting all its weight behind the PLO as the principal interlocutor in any negotiations on the resolution of the Palestinian question.

Equally important is the fact that Egypt is drifting further and further away from the Camp David accords as basis for future negotiations on the Arab- Israeli conflict. All such signals from Egypt lend added force to the credentials of Egypt as the heart and spirit of the Arab World and whose return to the Arab fold and the Arab League must become an Arab national request.

Moreover, Mubarak's conditional offer to visit Israel is clearly due to the worldwide recognition that Tel Aviv is seeking to throw red herrings in the path of the emerging international mainstream on the future course of the Arab- Israeli talks.

Israel's continued ostrichism in the face of new realities in the Middle East can fool no one, not even the Israeli people themselves. There is no way Israel's aging leadership can turn the political clock back. The sooner they come to terms with the recent facts in the Middle Eastern theatre, the better for all the parties concerned.

That is why Mubarak's conditional offer to travel to Tel Aviv is sound and well appreciated worldwide. In so doing President Mubarak has served Israel with notice that the false baits that it is offering to the Arab countries cannot and will not reverse the tide that has picked up momentum in the wake of PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's utterance of the magic words in Geneva few weeks ago—i.e., acceptance of the U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and Israel's right to exist and the rejection of terrorism in all its forms.

Thus Israel's delaying tactics can mean only one thing at the end: much important time and opportunities would go down the drain and Israel's talk about new peace overtures based on a modified version of Camp David accords would remain much ado about nothing.

Need for Jordan-PLO Coordination Stressed

JN2812093588 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 28 Dec 88 pp 1,16

[Editorial: "A New Phase"]

[Text] The Arab-Israeli conflict has entered a new phase, which has begun with the recent PNC resolutions and the declaration of the Palestinian state. The PLO's acceptance of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and its assertion of the right of every state in the region to live in peace and security are a major landmark in this phase.

Furthermore, the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue has come to affirm that the peace process has completed the period of readiness and that the surge toward the international conference is now only a matter of time.

All this underlines the extreme importance of coordination and consultation among Arab leaderships, especially between Jordan and the PLO, to maintain the peace momentum and to tackle any new development. It is obvious that the Israeli entity is preparing to face this phase with a large-scale political campaign.

World understanding of the Palestine question and the Palestinian people's right to set up their state on their national soil, the change in the U.S. stand, and the international effort to settle all regional conflicts have all confronted Israeli entity with what it has always avoided and denied; namely, the respect for international legitimacy and its resolutions.

During his meeting yestereday with the three members of the PLO Executive Committee, Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i reviewed recent achievements and discussed the need for coordination between Jordan and the PLO. Both are basic parties in any settlement of the Middle East crisis. Moreover, the bonds uniting the two peoples make it incumbent on both sides to continue the coordination efforts and dialogue between them on the one hand, and between them and all Arab brothers on the other.

Those who follow Israeli statements will quickly understand the Israeli entity's anxiety about these efforts and the general Arab determination to follow up on what has been achieved through the Algiers resolutions, the UN General Assembly session in Geneva, and finally the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue.

The main basic task which must be assumed by everyone now is to preserve what has been achieved during the past few weeks and to exert every effort to maintain the political moves whether on the Arab or international

level until these collective efforts lead to the international conferencce and the comprehensive respect for international legitimacy and its resolutions, especially with regard to Israeli withdrawal and the right to self-determination for the Palestinian Arab people.

Prime Minister Receives Senator Rockefeller

JN2912141788 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i received in his office today U.S. Senator John Rockefeller. During the meeting, they reviewed the existing relations of cooperation between Jordan and the United States as well as developments on the international and regional scenes. The meeting was attended by the U.S. ambassador in Amman.

Officers To Supervise Cuban Angola Withdrawal

JN2912134088 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Our radio has learned from a responsible source in the Jordanian Armed Forces that a number of Jordanian officers have been designated to participate in the UN peacekeeping forces that will supervise the Cuban forces' withdrawal from Angola.

It is noteworthy that the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is the first Arab country to be asked to participate in the UN peacekeeping forces. The source added that this team of officers has been designated at the request of UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in view of the excellent reputation enjoyed worldwide by the Jordanian Armed Forces because of their military efficiency and discipline.

In addition to Jordan, officers from Algeria, India, Congo, Argentina, Brazil, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Spain, and Norway will participate in these forces.

General Fathi Abu Talib, Armed Forces chief of staff, received the Jordanian officers in the presence of the assistant chief of staff for intelligence. The number of this delegation of officers was not known.

Seminar on West Bank Housing Opens 28 Dec

JN2812140288 Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] A symposium on housing and organizational structure began today at the headquarters of the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee. Dr Ahmad Qatanani, director of the Palestinian Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry, delivered a speech on behalf of the Jordanian side in which he asserted the importance of convening the symposium and the need to hold more meetings and carry out studies and research to enhance citizens' steadfastness in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip against the Israeli settlement onslaught.

Dr Qatanani reviewed the measures adopted by the occupation authorities which aim to confiscate the Palestinian land and disperse its inahabitants by establishing and enlarging settlements, demolishing Arab citizens' houses under the pretext of resisting occupation, and imposing restrictions on them to prevent them from making the best use of their lands.

Dr Qatanani added that the housing sector in the occupied homeland has special importance due to its distinguished relations with the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict, in addition to its effects on the social and economic aspects and providing job opportunities. He said that this calls for adopting measures and methods to face the Judaization policy and confiscation of the land which is pursued by the occupation authorities. He pointed out that these authorities have confiscated 53 percent of the Arab land in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Dr Qatanani also reviewed the efforts by the Jordanian-Palestinioan Joint Committee to provide housing to citizens in the occupied homeland, whether through individual houses or charitable housing societies.

Dr Fu'ad Busaysu, secretary general of the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee, delivered a specch in which he praised Jordan's efforts in sponsoring and supporting the activities of national steadfastness in occupied Palestine. He pointed out that the convening of this symposium proceeds from the outstanding performance of the housing sector in bolstering steadfastness and its connection with the dimensions of the Israeli organizational structure plan in the occupied territory.

The 2-day symposium will discuss working papers dealing with the occupation authorities' regional structural plan for the West Bank, the social and economic dimensions of the occupation authorities' organizational structure in the West Bank, and the legal status of the organizational structure in the West Bank under occupation.

The papers will also deal with the topic of housing in the occupied homeland, the influence of housing in bolstering national steadfastness, as well as housing finance.

VOM Reports 29 Dec Israeli Raid, Casualties

NC2912090988 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0900 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] This morning Israeli warplanes raided positions in Tallat Ra's al-Naqqar in Al-Sultaniyah township in the Bint Jubayl District. There are a number of casualties.

More on Ground Action

NC2912092388 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0906 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Israeli helicopters fired rockets at positions in the Al-Sultaniyah in the South at 0915 this morning. There are some casualties. The Red Cross and first aid teams are trying to rescue them.

This raid came after Israeli tanks positioned in the occupied hills facing the liberated areas had pounded the area.

In the meantime, ground resistance confronted the raiding planes, which are still flying over the area.

It has been reported that a large number of the enemy's vehicles have been deployed on the hills of Al-Haddathah and Bayt Yahun, and are positioned in Bra'shit.

Four Amal Members Wounded

NC2912101688 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Israeli helicopters raided Tallat Ra's al-Naqqar in al-Sultaniyah of Bint Jubayl District at 0915 this morning, drawing antiaircraft fire.

Amal sources said four Israeli helicopters fired four rockets at one of its positions in the area, wounding four Amal members who were moved to Tyre hospitals.

Amal Refutes Israeli Claims

NC2912113288 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Excerpts] The Amal Movement has said that the Israeli raid this morning on its positions north of Tibnin wounded eight of its gunmen.

Security sources in the South reported that two Israeli Cobra helicopters fired seven air-to-surface rockets at 0900 today on a four-story building used as a center for Amal gunmen in Al-Sultaniyah Village. They added that the building was severely damaged. [passage omitted]

An Amal spokesman has denied Israeli claims that the targeted position was used as a basis for operations against Israel.

Palestinian Group Identifies 3 Killed by IDF

NC2812181788 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1715 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Excerpts] In the second operation of its kind in 24 hours, three members of a Palestinian group who infiltrated into Israel were killed this morning in a violent clash with Israeli soldiers in Ramim near the Israeli border. [passage omitted]

The Palestinian Liberation Front [PLF] this morning claimed responsibility for the attack and said that the three members of the armed group who carried out the operation had been killed.

The PLF said that the leader of the group was a Tunisian by the name of Khalid Salah Jalladi. His comrades were 'Atif Khalil, a Palestinian, and Nidal Jamil Abu Daqqah, a Syrian. All three were killed in the operation.

Group Claims Karachi Attack on Saudi Diplomat

NC2812174288 Paris AFP in English 1729 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Beirut, Dec 28 (AFP)—An underground organization, Soldiers of the Right, on Wednesday said it had carried out an attack in Karachi on Tuesday that left a Saudi diplomat seriously wounded.

The group issued a communique here accusing Hassan 'Ali al-Amiri, a Saudi vice consul, of working for the United States and Israel.

The Soldiers of the Right surfaced December 18 when they claimed to have abducted Jan Cools, a Belgian doctor seized in southern Lebanon last May, whom they accused of being an Israeli spy.

Mr. Amiri was returning to Saudi Arabia on Wednesday after being shot in the jaw while returning home from work late Tuesday in Karachi, police said.

Doctors in the Pakistani city said he was out of danger but had not been well enough to make a statement.

The communique here said he had been shot while coming out of the Saudi consulate, "a spy nest that plots against Moslem mujahidin (fighters) in order to serve the Great Satan, America, and its protege, Israel."

Syria Said To Plan Assassination of PLO Leaders

NC2912062288 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] According to Western diplomatic sources, Damascus has secretly prepared terrorist groups belonging to the PFLP-GC and Abu Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] for carrying out assassination operations against PLO leaders.

Car Bomb in West Beirut Causes Material Damage
NC2912093988 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0905 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] According to the latest reports, the explosion heard in the Cola area at 0845 this morning came from a previously damaged white Renault-12 in a car park near the Fakhr al-Din Secondary School. A bus driver named 'Adil Isma'il was wounded as he passed by. Another person was wounded while in a bus, and several cars were damaged. Military experts estimated the weight of the explosive inside the car at 40 kg of TNT.

Soviet View of Mideast Developments Cited
PM2912115388 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Dec 88 p 1

[Ghassan Shirbil report: "Soviet Leadership Satisfied With Palestinian Move"]

[Text] Beirut, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Some CPSU Central Committee members informed Lebanese party officials during their recent visit to Moscow that PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will request the inclusion of a Soviet unit in the international force proposed for deployment in the occupied Arab territories for a transitional period.

Quoting the Soviet officials, the party officials said that the international conference has made notable progress and is actually approaching, especially in the light of the U.S.-PLO dialogue which has just begun.

The Soviet officials emphasized that efforts to resolve regional crises are continuing in "the atmosphere of international detente." They urged everyone to be aware of this new fact. They also urged that crises be dealt with objectively, and that the need for "a balance of interests" be considered seriously.

The Soviet officials told the visiting delegation of the Soviet Union's willingness to help the Lebanese, but maintained that the principal role in a solution must be played by the Lebanese themselves.

The officials called on the various Lebanese parties to take advantage of the positive signs at the international and regional levels and deal with each other flexibly in order to preserve Lebanon's unity. They indicated that the shape of the regime is, above all, an internal matter.

The Soviet officials believe that the Middle East is witnessing new movements which will reflect positively on the situation in Lebanon, and that the Lebanese presidential elections will eventually be held, regardless of obstacles.

According to the delegation, the Soviet officials said that recent developments have proved erroneous the idea that "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," and reflected the need for international cooperation based on understanding and mutual interest.

They added that all parties to regional crises must understand this fact, adapt to it, and base their options on it. They emphasized that once the war ends in Lebanon the entire world will support that country.

The Lebanese party delegation returned with the impression that the Soviet Union is satisfied with the PLO's recent move, the initiation of a U.S. - Palestinian dialogue, as well as the Palestinian options which 'Arafat announced in his UN address in Geneva.

The Lebanese delegation sources said that Moscow is ready to play an active role in Lebanon, especially as its ambassador in Beirut, Vasiliy Kolotusha is in contact with all parties.

Khaddam Conveys Message to Al-Qadhdhafi, Returns
JN2912071888 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0515 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam has returned to Damascus following a brief working visit to Libya during which he delivered a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the 1 September revolution.

The message stresses Syria's support for fraternal Libya in confronting the U.S. threats to which Libya is being subjected.

During the meeting, talks dealt with the current Arab situation. The vice president arrived in Tripoli yesterday morning. He was received and seen off by Major 'Abd al-Salam Jallud, a number of Libyan officials, the Syrian charge d'affaires in Libya, and the embassy staff.

Khaddam, Red Cross Officials Discuss Lebanon
JN2912141588 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] At 1030 today Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam received (Andre Batiere), head of operations in the Red Cross Committee in Geneva, who was accompanied by (Micheal Luve), head of the Red Cross office in Lebanon; and (Alan Lunarts), head of the Red Cross office in Damascus. The meeting dealt with the Red Cross situation in Lebanon.

Effect of Superpower Politics on Mideast Viewed
JN1612172788 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 16 Dec 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: The current new developments on the international and Mideast levels and in this strategically and politically important region impose questions and responsibilities on Arabs—all Arabs without exception—including those who believe that they have removed themselves from the circle of affecting and being affected and from the framework of national struggle to ensure national identity; guarantee the future; and remove the boisterous Zionist greed from the land, resources, rights, and Arab dignity.

The Arab homeland is not an island in today's world. It is not possible for one part of it to remain unaffected by the situation in the world, strategic developments, and international interests, which are, in one way or another, crystallized through resources such as oil, strategic priorities in geographic positions, and political effects such as political, moral, or religious influences.

When the interests of the two main blocks of the world—or rather the interests of the United States, chief of the Western capitalist countries, and the Soviet Union, head of the socialist block—converge on a new strategy despite discrepancies in their previous principled stands, this convergence, which produced the so-called international detente, requires, or rather required, the practical implementation of a parallel process dealing with and settling regional conflicts that have long fed on the effects of the world's major conflict between the capitalist and socialist blocks.

This strategy is given various names and headlines based on excluding the components and tools of nuclear war, which destroys humankind as well as the winner and loser. They are also based on transferring the conflict or what some have called the competition among various social systems to new arenas, excluding the battlefields and weapons systems that lead to mass destruction.

In fact, a successful settlement of a number of the regional disputes has been achieved in which the loss of one side is greater than the other's gain. At the same time, the other side gains more somewhere else. Nevertheless, so far the two sides do not seem dissatisfied with what they have achieved in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The Arab-Zionist conflict, which they envelope with the title the Middle East conflict, is altogether the most dangerous regional dispute and the most complicated and difficult. The principles and means that have succeeded or might succeed in solving other regional disputes may not succeed this one. It is a conflict of a very specific nature, and its parties are not necessarily equivalent to those of other conflicts.

What is called the balance of interests cannot be achieved in the Middle East, where the nature of the problem and the conflict differs from other regional problems and conflicts. Anyone remote from the region and taken in by the brilliance of the detente process can be dragged into the position of equating the aggressor and the victim of aggression; the occupier the one whose land is occupied; the usurper and the one whose rights are usurped; the colonialist settler and the one who is stripped of his land and expelled from his home and country. The Arabs can be subjected to various forms of pressure to take part in a hasty operation for a regional settlement on terms and conditions that might not measure up to what they consider minimum accepted pan-Arab limits. Thus an alert and dynamic Arab stand is required, capable of dealing with the new international and regional situation.

Such a stand should not come from concessions followed by more concessions and abandonment of principles, which cannot lead to anything but greater retreats until the stage is reached of the surrender and renunciation of pan-Arab and national dignity; land; rights; and all the principles, objectives, and stands for which generations have lived and been martyred while growing up to the sounds of their worthiness and anthems of praise.

Just as the Zionist danger, supported by international imperialism, does not exclude any Arab country or group, so the Arab handling of the new stand should not exclude any Arab party. The more the Arab ranks are united, close, strong, and clinging to the minimum limits accepted nationally in any settlement, the greater will be the Arab influence on the international and regional operation. Syria, which carries its pan-Arab responsibilities with awareness, has and continues to work to make the Arab stand firm, clinging to principles and the right of the nation to existence, continuation, freedom; the right to self- determination, liberating the occupied territory, retrieving usurped rights, and paralyzing the cancerous Zionist expansionism.

It is working toward uniting the Arab stand. It was and continues to call for a united Arab stand proceding from adherance to the pan-Arab struggle against the Zionist danger and the accepted minimum limits of any settlement in the region. These limits are set by the Arab summit resolutions.

Syria agrees with every Arab on the pan-Arab stand. On the pan-Arab struggle against the Zionist enemy, Syria's banner enfolds the Arab banners hoisted in this struggle. Syria, which is present in the battle for the sake of Arab land and rights, welcomes every Arab country joining this battle, activating its participation in it, or returning on its arena. Syria does not place any conditions on any Arab, other than belief in the pan-Arab struggle and adherence to the pan-Arab objectives.

Detente, 'External Pressure' Viewed

JN1712164488 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 17 Dec 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Will the process of detente in international relations and that of resolving regional conflicts halt at the doors of the Middle East region? Or will they knock strongly at the doors of this region to tackle the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Lebanese issue, and other issues that have been preoccupying the region and the states that are interested in the region?

This is a question posed in the region in general and the Arab arena in particular because international detente, even if it does not affect national and fateful issues in some regions of the world, has for the Arabs an effect on their pan-Arab issue, their occupied territories, their usurped rights, and their fateful struggle with the expansionist Zionism—the struggle that has been going on for 40 years.

On the altar of this conflict, the Arabs have offered dear sacrifices and convoys of martyrs. In this conflict, they have spent a very high percentage of their incomes and wealth to defend their existence and protect their lands and territories from the Israeli war machine. The Arabs' demands in this conflict are neither an ideological luxury, an experiment in the pursuit of theories, nor dreams whose seriousness and realistic tone will be judged and assessed.

No, these demands represent an issue of existence or nonexistence. They represent an issue of right and justice, pertaining to the principles that the international community has accepted as rules governing relations among states, peoples, and human societies. These demands are issues pertaining to the freedom of peoples, their progress, and their right to self-determination. They are issues pertaining to terminating the foreign occupation of the national soil.

Hence, the Arabs' eagerness to preserve world peace should not prompt them to sacrifice their own peace. Moreover, their strong support for detente in international relations cannot prompt them to sacrifice their pan-Arab destiny. Furthemore, their unwavering support for efforts seeking to prevent the occurrence of a nuclear holocaust that will pose a threat to humankind should not prompt them in any way to surrender to the Israeli hand, which has seized nuclear weapons.

The Arabs' welcome to the resolution of regional conflicts and the removal of these conflicts from the road traveled by the bandwagon of international detente cannot tempt them to concede even an inch of their land or one of their rights to the occupiers; the usurpers; and the enemies of detente, peace, and the peoples' freedom and their right to self-determination.

All current indicators show that the two superpowers leading international detente are eager to follow up this process and are displaying seriousness in confronting regional conflicts with the intention of putting out their fires and cooling the tension that they create. This places on the Arabs a great responsibility, which requires a high degree of seriousness and a perception of the delicate lines dividing risks with negative consequences from those with beneficial results considering the new givens on the ground.

If others can take risks by conducting experiments in issues that affect the pan-Arab destiny and the future for tens if not for hundreds of years, the Arabs, from the pan-Arab perspective, have nothing to relinquish. The Arabs can neither offer territorial concessions nor can they forfeit rights. Besides, dignity is something indivisible. It is not subject to bidding or bargaining.

The Arabs support international detente. However, they also support the peoples' national liberation movement, which cannot and should not be allowed to stop or freeze under any slogan whatsoever. The Arabs support nuclear disarmament. However, they cannot at the same time envisage a world disarmament that leaves the Israeli rulers in possession of this weapon, as these rulers are adventurous and aggressive and seek to realize their expansionist regional ambitions, inspired by legends and superstitions.

The Arabs support the settlement of regional conflicts, including the conflict referred to in international forums as the Middle East conflict, but on the basis of the principles contained in the UN Charter and the UN resolutions, which prohibit the annexation of others' territory through the use of force and which ban the denial of people's rights to freedom, independence, and self-determination.

The Arabs seek to turn off the furnace of wars in the Middle East—the furnace whose fire has been started by the imperialists and their Zionist supporters, but not on the basis of rewarding the aggressor. No true settlement and no just peace can materialize if the peoples' rights to their territory, sovereignty, self-determination, and living in peace and security are not taken into account, no matter how strong external pressures may be.

All that can be reached with those who fall victim to pressure, with those who pant after the glitter of television cameras and the brilliance of the television screen, and with those who have tired of the struggle and the requirements for waging the battle of pan-Arab struggle will never be more than a semisettlement propped by two legs of cannabis that will fall down as soon as it faces any obstacle or turning point, and its fall will bring down everything that was built on it.

Afghanistan

Leaders Send New Year's Greeting to USSR

LD2812202488 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Esteemed Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan and PDPA Central Committee general secretary, and Prime Minister Dr Muhammad Hasan Sharq have sent the following congratulatory message:

On the occasion of the arrival of the new Christian year, 1989, to His Excellency M.S. Gorbachev, CPSU Central Committee general secretary and president of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, and His Excellency N.I. Ryzkhkov, USSR Council of Ministers chairman:

On behalf of the people of Afghanistan and ourselves we are delighted to express our warmest congratulations and best wishes to you, the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium, the USSR Government, and the friendly people of the Soviet Union.

The Government and people of the Republic of Afghanistan highly assess the endeavor and initiatives of the Soviet Union for the implementation of this country's peace program, disarmament, and search for ways to create a new and tranquil world.

The constructive and positive proposals of the Soviet Union's leadership for ensuring peace in Afghanistan—which are fully in conformity with the plans of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan for ending the fratricidal war and for restoring a durable peace in our country by political means and dialogue—enjoy our support.

We are fully confident that the traditional friendship, good neighborliness, and all around cooperation between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union will further expand and consolidate in the coming year in the interest of the people of both countries and to ensure a durable peace in the region and in the world.

Taking this opportunity, we express our best wishes for good health and prosperity to you, dear friends, and we wish friendly Soviet Union increasing success in the implementation of its policy of restructuring and in the maintainence of peace and international security.

'Abdul Wakil, minister of foreign affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, also sent a congratulatory telegram to Moscow on the occasion of the arrival of the new Christian year, 1989. The telegram is addressed to Eduard Amvrosiyevich Shevardnadze, USSR minister of foreign affairs.

Greetings to Asian Countries

LD2812091288 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0515 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 27, BAKHTAR—On behalf of the president of the Republic of Afghanistan, Najibullah and Dr. M. Hasan Sharq, prime minister, congratulatory messages have been sent to the leaders of Laos, Philippines, Singapore, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China, Thailand, Japan, Burma, Brunei and Maldives on the occasion of the New Year (1989).

While expressing best wishes of the people and Government of the Republic of Afghanistan the messages wish prosperity and tranquillity for the governments and people of the said countries in the year 1989.

The hope has been expressed in the messages that the friendly relations between the peoples of Afghanistan and the mentioned countries will further develop and strengthened in the interests of world peace and security.

IZVESTIYA Interviews Sharq on Peace Proposals

LD2512063088 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0509 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 24, BAKHTAR—Doctor Muhammad Hasan Sharq, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan received in his office the reporter of IZVESTIYA for an interview today.

During the interview Dr. Sharq responded to questions raised by the said reporter in relation to the recent peaceful proposals of Najibullah, president of the Republic of Afghanistan and statement of M.S. Gorbachev, general secretary of the CPSU CC, and president of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in the 43rd session of the UN General Assembly for the political solution of situation around Afghanistan and prospect of peace in the Republic of Afghanistan.

AFP: Nationalist Front 'To Replace' PDPA

BK2812134288 Hong Kong AFP in English 1325 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec 28 (AFP)—Kabul authorities plan to replace the ruling communist party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), with a nationalist and democratic party, a senior government official said here Wednesday.

"A committee has already been set up to change the name of the party and rewrite its platform," the official said.

"The PDPA will be transformed into a liberal, nationalist and democratic party," according to the official, who is close to Afghan leader Najibullah.

"The economic policies of the PDPA will be changed. It will no longer be socialist and there will be no reference to Leninism," the official said.

Afghan resistance groups have insisted on the dissolution of the PDPA as a condition to the formation of a broad-based coalition government in Kabul.

Wakil Interviewed After UN Session on Palestine

LD2512062288 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0424 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 24, BAKHTAR—The Afghan delegation which, participated in a press conference, held in Geneva recently, focussed its attention on developments taken place recently in and around Afghanistan, particularly on neutrality and demilitarization of our country.

This was stated by 'Abdul Wakil, foreign minister of the Republic of Afghanistan on his arrival to Kabul International Airport yesterday in an interview with a BAKHTAR reporter. Wakil was leading an Afghan delegation at the 43 session of UN General Assembly held in Geneva on Palestinian issue.

In addition, he went on to say, the Afghan delegation during its stay in Geneva, met with a number of foreign ministers of the participating countries including Javier Perez de Cuellar, UN secretary general, chairman of the 43 UN General Assembly session and Sadruddin Agha Khan, organizer of the UN human and economic assistance programme to Afghanistan.

During meeting with UN secretary general, he was demanded according to tasks assigned to him by the 43 session of the UN General Assembly, accelerate its work and activities on comprehensive and peaceful solution of the situation around Afghanistan, and to work to adopt constructive measures on convocation of an international conference on detemination of neutral stand as well as demilitrization of Afghanistan under UN auspices, Wakil stressed. [sentence as received]

While appreciating the activities of Sadruddin Agha Khan, in attracting human and economic assistance to Afghanistan, Wakil added that, he was demanded to intensify the process of sending the assistance to all parts of the country and help in providing much facilities on the way of returning refugees to their own country.

Sadruddin Agha Khan, while expressing his satisfaction from the all-sided and on timely cooperation of the government of the RA [Republic of Afghanistan] in implementation of UN human and economic program about Afghanistan, expressed his full readiness in organizing and sending assistance to Afghan people and reconstruction of the damaged economy of the country, Wakil added.

Touching upon the participation of Afghan delegation at the work of the 43 session of UN General Assembly on Palestinian issue, Wakil said, the delegation actively took part in the session, condemned the crimes of Israel in the occupied Arab lands and supported the recent decisions of the Palestinian National Council on creation an independent Palestinian state as well as the righteous struggle of Palestinians against Zionists.

The discussions of the UN General Assembly session on Palestinian issue started from December 13-15 in un European Headquarters, Geneva, during which majority of UN members expressed their all-sided support from the just and righteous struggle of Palestinians as well as the speech of Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO).

'Arafat in his speech delivered a number of new and constructive proposals which were warmely welcomed by the participants. The participants vehemently condemned the continuation of occupation of Arab lands by Israel and supported Palestinians just struggle and legal rights.

They considered the convocation of an international peace conference on solving Middle East problem as the only way for removing tension in Arab world and safeguarding of durable peace in the region and added that the Palestinian uprising in the occupied Arab lands is the manifestation of their strong will for achieving their legal rights, Wakil concluded.

Peasants Cooperatives Union Holds 9th Plenum

LD2512064088 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0451 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 24, BAKHTAR—The ninth plenum of the Central Council of the Union of Peasant's Cooperatives of the Republic of Afghanistan [RA] in connection to the aftermath growth of cooperative movement in the conditions of national reconciliation was held here today, reports BAKHTAR correspondent.

Niaz Muhammad Mohmand, Politburo member and secretary of the PDPA CC, Engineer Muhammad Ghofran, minister of agriculture and land reforms, members of Provincial Cooperatives' Unions, and a number of chairmen of consumer cooperatives from capital and provinces took part in the work of the plenum.

Nour Wahab Sapand, chairman of Central Council of the said union delivered a report on the activities and tasks assigned to peasants' in national reconciliation conditions.

The report, says in part that the Cooperative Union of the peasant's cooperatives of the RA has 29 provincial 37 district and subdistrict, level unions and 420 consumer and handicrafts cooperatives, with a strength of 135,000 members. They are functioning with a capital of afghanis 95,000,000 through 538 cooperatives.

The report added that right now over 640 agricultural cooperatives with a membership of 94,000 and a capital of afghanis 60,000,000 covering an area of 144,000 hectares of land are functioning in the country.

A number of heads of provincial cooperative unions of peasants spoke on the activities role and importance of such unions in provinces.

Plenum discussed a number of organizational issues.

The plenum, while evaluating the activities of the said movement, adopted necessary decisions on the expansion of cooperatives movement.

12,000 Youths Join Armed Forces Since March

LD2612065388 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0421 GMT 26 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 25, BAKHTAR—Totally, [word indistinctj] 12,000 youths have voluntarily joined to the ranks of the government Armed Forces, only in Kabol Province during the current Afghan year started March 20, 1988.

In this connection over 1,100 youths have joined voluntarity to the ranks of the government armed forces in the past month alone in the province.

Likewise, over one hundred youths members of the Democratic Youth Organization of Afghanistan (DYOA) have joined to the ranks of the contingent of Special Guard General Command yesterday, reported BAKHTAR correspondent.

In a meeting held on the occasion in youths central club, secretary of the DYOA, CC, spoke on the strengthening of the Armed Forces in present-day conditions as well as facilities and privileges provided to the said command by the government.

At the end, a volunteer youth on behalf of others, expressed his complete readiness for safeguarding of nation-wide peace and implementation of national reconciliation policy in the country. Joining voluntarily youths to the Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan is going on throughout the country.

Armed Forces Deal 'Shattering Blows' to Rebels

LD2812212688 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] In the past 24 hours Armed Forces units and companies have dealt shattering blows at the extremist and opposition groups at Qandahar, Nangarhar, and Balkh Provinces and at Khowst major-district. Heavy loss of life and materiel has been suffered by the warmongers.

The Armed Forces crushed an extremist warmongering group which intended to disrupt peace and security in Balkh Province villages by lauching heavy weapons' attacks against it. The units and companies of the State Security Ministry killed 23 extremists, including their ringleader, 'Abdollah, captured 12 of them, and wounded 25 others. Two rocket launchers and one heavy machinegun were confiscated. Two mortars and several enemy hideouts were destroyed.

According to another report the Armed Forces attacked the gathering place of extremists at Darreh-ye Nur subdistrict, Nangarhar Province as a result of which 8 warmongers were killed and another 18 were wounded. Two weapons and ammunition dumps belonging to the enemy were destroyed.

As a result of attacks by the Armed Forces at the gathering places of the extremists at Agam subdistrict and in Melwa and Shiveh Districts, nine warmongers were wounded. Two extremists' weapons and ammunition dumps were also destroyed in the operations.

Another report states that as a result of attacks by the Armed Forces at the extremists' hideouts in villages of Qandahar Province, 17 extremists were killed and 29 were wounded. One rocket missile unit, 39 assorted weapons, one weapons and ammunition dump, one DShK, two rocket launchers, one mortar, and one tractor carrying enemy weapons and ammunition were destroyed.

Armed Forces units and companies at Khowst major district killed a number of extremists who had crossed the border and were trying to disrupt peace and security. One DShK and two light enemy weapons were destroyed in the operation.

Another report says that in the course of mopping-up operations around Kabol Province, 2 people were killed in Shakardara district. In Sarowbi District 41 extremists were killed, and dozens of warmongers were wounded. As a result of the operation assorted enemy weapons were destroyed. Another report states that as a result of an Armed Forces operation in Shindand district, Herat Province, seven extremists were killed and one was wounded.

Rebels Kill 46 Troops, Down 4 Helicopters

BK2812143488 Hong Kong AFP in English 1359 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 28 (AFP)—Afghan resistance guerrillas have killed 46 government troops and destroyed four helicopters in a rocket attack on a base in northern Baghlan Province, resistance sources said here Wednesday.

Mujahidin guerrillas from several groups launched a joint rocket attack monday on the Kelagai military base.

They killed 46 soldiers, destroyed four helicopters and damaged several buildings, the sources said.

The guerrillas had attacked an Army convoy Thursday on the Salang Highway in northern Parvan Province destroying three oil tankers, the sources said.

The strategic road leads north from Kabul to the border with the Soviet Union.

Mujahidin fighters also killed more than 20 Afghan Government troops during operations last week in eastern Nangarhar Province, the sources added.

Protests Nos 165, 166 Submitted to UNGOMAP

LD2912063688 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0506 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec 28 BAKHTAR—The 165th and 166th notices of the Republic of Afghanistan on flagrant violations by Pakistan of the 2d article, Document no. 1 of the Geneva Accords was submitted today to the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP).

The notices underlined 17 instances of violation by Pakistan in which precise information is given. The notices asked the UNGOMAP to investigate the violations according to Paragraph No. 7, Document No. 4 of the Geneva agreements and convey the findings to the Republic of Afghanistan and UN secretary general representative.

Opium Seized by Farah Province Police

LD2812141988 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1330 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Excerpt] A quantity of opium weighing 1,135 kg, which was being transported from the district of Grishk, was recently captured by officials of the Farah Province Police Command in the Golestan area of the province. BAKHTAR reports that the opium had been cleverly placed in six drums. [passage omitted]

Bangladesh

Ershad Departs for SAARC Summit in Islamabad

BK2912071688 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0700 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Excerpt] President Ershad left Dhaka this morning for Islamabad to attend the fourth summit conference of the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, SAARC. He is accompanied by Begum Rashan Ershad.

President Ershad was seen off at the airport by Vice President Nurul Islam, Prime Minister Moudud Ahmad, ministers, chiefs of the three services, diplomats, high civil and military officials. [passage omitted]

Deputy Prime Minister Rules Out Early Election

BK2912082488 Hong Kong AFP in English 0805 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Excerpts] Dhaka, Dec 29 (AFP)—A senior minister has ruled out the possibility of a mid-term general election in Bangladesh, denying rumours in political circles here.

There is no possibility of a parliamentary election before the end of the term of the current Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) in March 1993, the official BSS news agency quoted Deputy Prime Minister and ruling Jatiya Party Secretary Shah Moazzam Hussain as saying in western Bangladesh Wednesday.

Mr Hussain added that some opposition parties "had betrayed the cause of democratic politics" by choosing not to take part in the last parliamentary election in March this year. [passage omitted]

The possibility of a mid-term poll, probably in the coming year, has become a widely-mentioned issue among the opposition parties who appear to have lost much of their steam in the fight to topple Mr Ershad in recent months because of quarrelling among themselves over their past differences, observers said.

Sources close to the opposition said that the speculation followed reports that unnamed Western donors had indicated it would be a good idea to have a fair and creditable election in Bangladesh.

The donors were said to have expressed general satisfaction with the way Mr Ershad had handled disastrous flooding in Bangladesh but suggested that a credible poll with a high voter turnout and the participation of the major opposition parties would create a more favourable climate for aid to Bangladesh in their countries.

Begum Zia, widow of assassinated President Ziaur Rahman and a staunch opponent of the 58-year-old General Ershad, said last week that her party might consider taking part in future election "if it was held under a neutral caretaker government."

She did not indicate if she felt such an election were possible under Mr Ershad as president, although she has consistently said in the past that he should step down before free and fair elections can be held.

Mr Ershad toppled her BNP-led government in the 1982 bloodless coup.

Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Bangladesh's first president Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, told the press last week she had not heard anything about an early election.

"Why should the government, having an absolute majority in parliament and no serious immediate opposition threat, go for such an election," she added.

But the tone of her speeches at recent rallies and meetings across the country suggested she was preparing for a possible general election, political observers said.

India

Prime Minister Leaves for SAARC Meeting

BK2912070288 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0630 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, left for Islamabad this morning to attend the SAARC summit. He was seen off by his cabinet colleagues and other dignitaries and high officials.

Speaking to newsmen before his departure, Mr Gandhi said India wants the best of relations with Pakistan. He said that with the new democratically elected government in Pakistan we will be able to lay foundations for true friendship between the two countries.

There will be three rounds of talks between Mr Rajiv Gandhi and the Pakistani prime minister, Ms Benazir Bhutto.

These meetings will provide an opportunity to the two leaders for bilateral consultations.

They are likely to cover the Siachen issue and terrorism in Punjab.

Mr Gandhi will also be meeting the Sri Lankan president, Jayewardene, and other SAARC leaders during his stay in Islamabad.

Siachen Troop Withdrawal Report 'Speculative'

BK2912053488 Hong Kong AFP in English 0512 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] New Delhi, Dec 29 (AFP)—Reports in the Pakistani press that India and Pakistan had agreed to withdraw their troops from the disputed Siachen Glacier were "speculative", an Indian Government spokesman has said.

The spokesman was commenting late Wednesday on a report carried by the Pakistani daily JANG, which said that both countries had agreed to make the area into a no-man's land.

However the glacier dispute would be discussed by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and newly-elected Pakistan Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in meetings in Islamabad in the next few days, the official added.

Indian and Pakistani officials last met here to discuss the 17,200 foot (5,400 meter) high glacier located in strategic Kashmir here in September and a second meeting is scheduled for early next year in Islamabad.

Pakistani and Indian forces are currently ranged along a line of actual control set during fighting between the two sides in 1971.

PRC Party Delegation Meets Congress-I Leader

BK2612163688 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 26 Dec 88

[Text] A three member delegation of the Chinese Communist Party, now in New Delhi, met the Congress-I general secretary, Mr V.N. Gadgil, and the Forward Bloc general secretary, Mr Chitta Basu. The delegation is led by Mr Li Changren, deputy head of the Communist Party's International Department.

During his talks Mr Li Changren observed that the recent visit of the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, to China opened a new chapter in the relations between the two countries.

Reinforcements Sent to Andhra Pradesh

BK2812130888 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] The Andhra Pradesh government has appointed a judicial inquiry commission to probe into the murder of the Congress-I MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], Mr V. Mohanaranga Rao.

Speaking to newsmen in Hyderabad today, the state chief minister, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, said that the terms of reference for the commission and the name of its chairman will be announced soon.

He said a three member committee has also been set up to assess the damage to public and private property in the coastal districts of east and west Godavari, Krishna, and Guntur. The committee will submits its report within a week.

The Center has dispatched 3 more companies of paramilitary forces to Andhra Pradesh to deal with the law and order situation. Ten companies of the Central Security Personnel were sent on Monday and three yesterday to assist the state administration.

The chief minister, Mr N.T. Rama Rao, who spoke to the home minister, Mr Buta Singh, yesterday had asked for more central forces.

Violence continued in the coastal districts today also despite curfew and shoot-at-sight orders. In all 29 towns have been put under curfew. In Vijayawada, the curfew was relaxed to enable the people to pay their last respect to the murdered Congress-I legislator, Mr V. Mohanaranga Rao.

At a joint press conference in Hyderabad leaders of Telugu Desam, Janata, and BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and CPI-M aileged that the Congress-I is taking political advantage of the unfortunate murder.

The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has assured the Andhra Pradesh government of all assistance in its efforts to restore peace and harmony in the disturbed areas. Mr Gandhi was talking to newsmen on his arrival in the Tiruchirappalli today.

When asked about the possibility of president's rule in Andhra Pradesh, he said the central government is not in favor of it.

To another query, the prime minister expressed happiness that the SAARC summit meeting is being held in a democratic set up.

Situation 'Peaceful' in Towns

BK2912043688 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] In Andhra Pradesh, the situation in the riot-affected coastal districts is peaceful. The director general of police told our Hyderabad correspondent this morning that there was no further report of violence since last night.

However, the curfew was extended in almost all the coastal towns tomorrow with a relaxation of 3 hours this morning. The curfew has been imposed in 29 towns in four districts of East and West Godawari, Guntur, and Krishna.

The Andhra Pradesh cabinet met yesterday thrice and reviewed the law and order situation. It is also meeting this morning to consider the latest position.

A spokesman of the state Road Transport Corporation told our correspondent that nearly 1,000 buses were damaged all over the state during the last 3 days. Peace committees have been formed to restore normalcy in some of the affected areas.

Fifty platoons of CRPF [Central Reserve Police Force] and the state armed reserve police have taken position at all vulnerable points and are patrolling the sensitive areas.

Activities of 'Terrorists' in Punjab Noted

20 'Terrorists' Arrested

BK2412155488 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 24 Dec 88

[Text] In Punjab, 20 terrorists and their harborers have been arrested since yesterday evening. An official spokesman said in Chandigarh that 12 of them were arrested in Gurdaspur and 6 in Amritsar District.

Two hard-core terrorists surrendered in Ludhiana District. Some arms and ammunition have also been recovered from them.

Terrorists gunned down two persons and seriously injured another two in separate incidents in Amritsar District.

2 'Terrorists' Killed

BK2912075888 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] In Punjab, security forces have killed two terrorists responsible for the kidnap and killing of five bus passengers at Makhu. The terrorists, who were killed in separate encounters, have been identified as Karan Singh and Trilochan Singh.

An official spokesman said in Chandigarh this morning that the two terrorists tried to kidnap a rice mill owner from Zaharkot area in Jullundur District.

On getting information, the police rushed to the spot and in the ensuing encounter Karan Singh was killed on the spot, while Trilochan Singh escaped. The security forces chased him for about 20 km and killed in an encounter.

Earlier, Avtar Singh, one more member of the 4-member terrorist group involved in the killing, was killed on Tuesday.

4 'Pakistan-Trained' Youths Arrested in Kashmir

BK2912043488 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Four Pakistan-trained youths were arrested in Anantnag District of Jammu and Kashmir. A large quantity of arms and ammunition has been recovered from them.

Reports on U.S. Wheat Standards Called 'Baseless'

BK2912125588 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] The government has described as baseless and misleading reports appearing in a section of the press that the wheat being imported from the United States is unfit for human consumption.

An official press release issued in New Delhi said the quality standards set for the purchase of the American wheat are stricter than those notified under the Government of India's Prevention of Food Adulteration Rules 1955. It said in the shipment of wheat so far received damaged grains are far less than the specified limit.

Year-End State of Economy Report Released

BK2712140388 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] The Finance Ministry has projected a strong recovery of the Indian economy this year with impressive performance in several key sectors. The year-end review of the Ministry says the gross domestic product is to go up by 10 percent with the inflation rate coming down to less than 7 percent.

It said according to available figures the rate of wholesale price index has come down to 6.4 percent from 10.6 last year. The prices have fallen considerably with actual price increase during the current year recording only 4.1 percent as compared to over 8.4 percent last year. Money supply was also kept in check.

The review says the total agriculture production in the country is expected to register a growth rate of 12 percent and the index of industrial production is likely to go up by 10 percent.

The food grain production is expected to touch a record level of 170 million tons.

Iran

Afghan Mujahidin Groups Issue Statement

LD2812135688 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Following negotiations between the eight-member Afghan mujahidin coalition based in Iran, headed by Muhammad Karim Khalili, and the seven-member Afghan mujahidin coalition based in Peshawar in Pakistan, headed by Burhanuddin Rabbani, a joint statement was issued in Tehran by the coalitions.

According to a Central News Unit report, the statement points out that the victories achieved by the Afghan nation against the invaders are in compliance with the Almighty's orders and the teachings of the Holy Koran, and are due to the Afghan nation's faith. It states: Once again we emphasize the importance of the Afghan nation's attention to these factors. We urge the Afghan nation to guard these achivements with vigilance and alertness.

The statement further says: The future government of Afghanistan will be an Islamic government, formed on the basis of the free will of the Muslim people, who will safeguard with their blood the independence, territorial integrity, and nonalignment of Afghanistan.

Another part of the statement declares: We will not spare any effort to drive the invaders out of Afghanistan. As unity among the Afghan nation is one of the main demands of the Afghan mujahidin, we will in no way allow this unity to be undermined.

Further, the statement stressed the principle of respect for justice in all aspects pertaining to the livelihood of various ethnic and religious groups in Afghanistan. The plan for bringing the UN Forces into Afghanistan and the subsequent disarming of the Afghan nation is strongly condemned in the statement and interpreted as a colonialist conspiracy.

The statement concludes by saying: Until the invading forces totally withdraw and their domestic mercenaries are toppled, we will continue our armed struggle and not accept any kind of ceasefire.

Afghan Shi'ites To Form Single Organization

LD2312163688 Tehran IRNA in English 1617 GMT 23 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA—Afghan resistance groups in Iran are uniting under a single organization and command structure details of which will be announced in the near future, according to one resistance official.

"The union of combatant Shi'a groups under a single organization is an important step towards final victory and achieving the goals of the Islamic revolution of Afghanistan," said Hojjat ol-Eslam Qorban 'Ali Irfani [name as received].

Irfani a member of the Central Council of the Nasr organization and representative of the new Shi'a alliance in the resistance council inside Afghanistan was speaking to IRNA Friday after arriving at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport from Pakistan.

He said his visit is aimed at creating necessary coordination between all Shi'a groups.

Majlis Speaker Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani Friday supported Shi'a and Sunni groups fighting to liberate Afghanistan and called on them not to heed attempts by the United States to divide them.

"They must know that if America starts a Shi'a-Sunni war and sets one group as being in Iran in front of the other as being in Pakistan this will be the first problem for the future of Afghanistan," he stressed in his Friday prayer sermon.

His criticism of the U.S. was in connection with what he said was America's disapproval of Moscow's offer earlier this month to hold talks with the Iran-based Afghan alliance.

Irfani said the Shi'a groups inside Afghanistan had tried to form a single command structure from the very beginning but the lapse of time had gradually made full unity a necessity.

He said with the recent capture by the Shi'a mujahidin of the historic city of Bamian, 125 kms west of Kabul, the ground was set for "the liberation of the rest of the Hazarjat region in central Afghanistan."

The Afghan alliance in Iran includes the Hezbollah of Afghanistan, the Popular Front of Afghanistan, the Islamic Resurgence of Afghanistan, the Islamic Movement, the United Islamic Call, the Islamic Jihad Guards, the Islamic Forces Organization and the Nasr Organization.

Syrian Foreign Minister Continues Visit

Meets With Majlis Speaker

LD2812164788 Tehran IRNA in English 1625 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Majlis speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani today discussed with visiting Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' latest developments in the region and the world including the Palestinian and Lebanese issues.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani, pointing to the two countries' common stance on many recent regional and international issues, called for "expansion of cooperation, more than ever before."

The acting armed forces commander-in-chief also announced the Islamic Republic's readiness to strengthen resistant forces fighting the Zionist regime and the U.S. at this crucial juncture.

In response, Al-Shar' underlined the significance of friendly ties between the two countries.

The Syrian foreign minister carrying a message from President Hafiz al-Asad for his Iranian counterpart Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Khamene'i arrived here yesterday.

Holds Talks With Musavi

LD2812183688 Tehran IRNA in English 1825 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Iran and Syria cannot remain indifferent towards regional and international developments "in view of their strategic relationship," Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi said today.

"The Islamic Republic is in direct contact with developments underway and therefore, likes to have constant exchange of viewpoints in order to closely coordinate policies," Musavi told Syrian Foreign Affairs Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Welcoming "friendly gestures" of Persian Gulf states, he however cautioned "Islamic Iran will firmly stand against any move likely to jeopardize Persian Gulf security and interests of regional people."

Elsewhere, the premier underlined the need for Libya's alertness against foreign threats and stressed support for Tripoli against U.S. plots.

In reply, Faruq al-Shar' briefed Musavi on Syrian outlooks on regional and international issues and reiterated further coordination between Tehran and Damascus against conspiracies hatched by "common enemies of the two countries."

Branding the Iraqi regime as the major supporter of compromisers with the Zionist regime, he said "today, Baghdad is in fact one of the pioneers of this treason."

The Syrian minister who arrived here Tuesday, has already held talks with President 'Ali Khamene'i, Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati.

Damascus Notes Tehran Meetings

JN2812190088 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran—Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i this morning received Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati; Ahmad Zinu, Syrian charge d'affairs in Tehran; and Hasan Akhtari, Iranian ambassador in Damascus, attended.

During the meeting, Al-Shar' conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to President Khamene'i. President Khamene'i asked Al-Shar' to convey his greetings to President Hafiz al-Asad.

Khamene'i asserted Syria's importance, under the leadership of the president, on the regional and international levels. He praised its principled stands in confronting the Zionist entity. President Khamene'i expressed the Iranian leadership's interest in achieving more improvement in relations with Syria in all fields.

During the meeting, developments in the region were reviewed, particularly those related to the Palestinian question and the situation in the Gulf region. The viewpoints were in agreement on the need to continue support for the Palestinian question and the uprising in the occupied territories. They were also in agreement on the need to build ties of cooperation and good-neighborness between Iran and the Gulf Arab states to guarantee security and stability in this region.

Al-Shar' also met with Iranian Prime minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi. The meeting dealt with horizons of cooperation between the two countries in all fields. An agreement was reached on laying suitable frameworks and formulas to broaden and entrench this cooperation. They also conducted a general review of developments in the region.

Al-Shar' then met with Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Iranian Islamic Majlis. Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Khalkhali, chairman of the Majlis External Affairs Committee, attended.

Rafsanjani asserted the need to continue and intensify contacts between officials in the two friendly countries. He expressed his high apperaciation for the stand of Syria, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, toward the fundamental issues in the region and the international arena.

While discussing the situation in the Gulf region, Rafsanjani praised Syria's efforts to improve the atmosphere of relations between Iran and the Gulf Arab states. He asserted Iran's readiness to overcome the obstacles that obstruct the improvement of these relations.

Concludes Visit, Departs

LD2912154688 Tehran IRNA in English 1515 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 29, IRNA—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' who was here with a message for President 'Ali Khamene'i from President Hafiz al-Asad left for Damascus today at the end of his two-day visit.

Before departure Al-Shar' told reporters "important" talks were held with Iranian officials on the regional situation especially in view of the cease-fire in the Iraqi war (Aug. 20).

Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati who saw off his Syrian counterpart at the airport told reporters that understanding was reached for expansion of Tehran-Damascus relations which "would expand significantly in the future."

Al-Shar' was also informed of Iran's decision for promoting ties with the Persian Gulf states, Velayati said.

During his stay in Iran, the Syrian minister met with Ayatollah Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, President 'Ali Khamene'i, Majlis Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi, in addition to exchanging views with Velayati on matters of mutual interest.

DPRK Foreign Minister Meets With Leaders

Meets With Khamene'i

LD2812165588 Tehran IRNA in English 1630 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Foreign Minister of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) Kim Yong-nam submitted to President 'Ali Khamene'i a message from his DPRK counterpart Kim Il-song, Wednesday.

During the meeting, also attended by North Korean Minister of External Economic Affairs Chong Son-nam, Kim invited President Khamene'i, on behalf of the DPRK president, to pay a state visit to Pyongyang.

Kim, urging for expansion of mutual cooperation, called on the Islamic Republic for technical help in exploring and exploiting oil.

Khamene'i, thanking the DPRK president for his message, lauded the Pyongyang government for siding with the Islamic Republic under crucial conditions.

"Iran has valuable experiences in oil exploitation and is ready to cooperate with DPRK in this field," added the president.

North Korean ministers of foreign affairs and external economic affairs, arrived in Tehran on December 26, heading a top level delegation.

Musavi Receives DPRK Ministers

LD2812204188 Tehran IRNA in English 1830 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Tehran and Pyongyang can further expand their relations which withstood the test of the Iraqi aggression, Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi told visiting ministers of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) today.

Foreign Minister Kim Yong-nam and External Economic Affairs Minister Chong Son-nam briefed Musavi on their political and economic talks with Iranian officials. Kim expressed hope that cooperation would further expand in various fields.

The North Korean ministers heading a high-powered delegation arrived here Monday at the invitation of Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and Construction Jihad Minister Gholamreza Foruzesh.

Oil Exports to DPRK Announced

LD2912092388 Tehran IRNA in English 0915 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec 29, IRNA—Iran will export 2 million tons of crude oil to North Korea annually begining next year, said the Oil Ministry Public Relations Office here Thursday.

The agreement was reached during a meeting of the visiting North Korean Minister of External Economic Affairs Chong Son-nam and Foreign Minister Kim Yong-nam with Iran's Oil Minister Gholamreza Aqazadeh here Wednesday afternoon, it added.

The North Korean delegation which arrived here last Monday also requested Aqazadeh to dispatch experts from Iran's Oil Ministry to North Korea to assist Pyongyang in oil exploration and exploitation projects, which was accepted. Therefore, an Iranian team of experts will leave for Pyongyang in the near future.

The North Korean foreign minister told Aqazadeh that due to specific geophysical conditions of his country oil reserves may exist in North Korea. To help explore possible resources, he called for bilateral cooperation in the field of oil. The proposal was welcomed by Aqazadeh.

First Shipment of Aid Leaves for Armenia

LD1512104988 Tehran IRNA in English 0941 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 15, IRNA—A plane carrying 20 tons of Iranian aid to the quake victims of the Soviet Republic of Armenia left Tehran for Yerevan Thursday morning.

The Soviet ambassador to Tehran Vladimir V. Gudev was present at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport when the shipment donated by Iran's Red Crescent Society and the Armenian minority was sent to the Armenian capital.

Ambassador Gudev thanked the Iranian Red Crescent as well as the Armenians for their donations.

USSR Envoy Delivers Shevardnadze Message

LD1812102888 Tehran IRNA in English 0935 GMT 18 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 18, IRNA—Soviet Ambassador to Tehran Vladimir V. Gudev in a meeting with First Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati presented a message from Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze to his Iranian counterpart 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Sunday morning, said the Foreign Ministry Public Relations Office.

The Soviet diplomat told Besharati that his evaluation of the trend of Iran-U.S.S.R. relations was positive. He also thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for having sent relief aid to the Soviet Armenia quake victims.

Besharati thanking the Soviet foreign minister for his friendly message said that in his opinion a new chapter has been opened in bilateral relations. He added that both sides have taken positive steps in a short period of time.

Turkish Envoy, Mohtashemi Discuss Drug Traffic

LD1412174388 Tehran IRNA in English 1649 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 14, IRNA—Interior Minister 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi today discussed with the Turkish ambassador ways of surpressing the cross border drug traffic and plots of miscreants to tarnish mutual ties.

"On behalf of the Turkish Government, I assure that any activity against the people and government of Iran will not be tolerated", said Omer Akbel calling for tight security measures by both countries on their joint borders against "traffickers and opponents of the Tehran and Ankara governments."

Mohtashemi replied "We, too, believe that our common enemies are trying to damage Tehran-Ankara friendly ties which have withstood the most crucial ties."

Iran and Turkey should deal "vigilantly and prudently" and foil all such plots, said the interior minister calling for coordinated efforts by the two neighbours to strengthen security on their joint borders.

Turkish Envoy Discusses Trade With Iravani

TA2512144588 Ankara ANATOLIA in English 1410 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran (A.A)—Commercial and economic cooperation and relations between Iran and Turkey were discussed yesterday between Turkey's Ambassador to Tehran Omer Akbel and Iranian Minister of Finance Mohammad Javad Iravani.

At the meeting Ambassador Akbel pointed out that Turkey and Iran being two countries between which no great problems had aroused since ages, the economic relations had to be based on long term cooperation. He added that Turkey was looking forward for long term project on the joint pipe line of natural gas, and the installation of petro-chemical and [word indistinct] plants.

Minister Iravani in turn declared that as an outcome of new policies applied in Iran the volume of trade with Turkey had increased 15-fold since the revolution. He further worded their expectation that Turkey's imports from Iran be not limited with raw petroleum only and said that state institutions had been instructed to continue to buy many of their [words indistinct]. Turkey, he went on saying that the implementation of the preferential trade status within the framework of the Economic Cooperation Commission between Turkey, Iran and Pakistan was bound to lessen the custom barriers and that this in turn was to help Iran in her exports of products other than petroleum.

The talks also concentrated on future cooperation in medicine and industry and the opening of branches or representations of Turkish banks in Iran.

Turkey's exports to Iran within the first eight months of the year reached the level of 320 million dollars. Imports within the same period are at level of 487 million dollars. By the end of the year these figures are expected to rise to 480 million and 750 million dollars respectively.

Czech Premier To Visit 'Early' in New Year

LD2812161688 Tehran IRNA in English 1600 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—Czechoslovakian Prime Minister Ladislav Adamec is to pay an official visit to Tehran early next Christian year, Czech Ambassador Milan Macha said Wednesday.

In a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs 'Alireza Mo'ayeri here, Macha also called for expansion of mutual cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields.

Mo'ayeri replied that the Islamic Republic believes the Czech premier's visit would help further expand Tehran-Prague ties.

Interior Minister Invited To Visit Algeria

LD2712145588 Tehran IRNA in English 1450 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 27, IRNA—Algerian Ambassador Mohamed Ben Khalifa met Interior Minister 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi today and announced the solidarity and full support of the Algerian revolution to the Islamic revolution in Iran.

The two also discussed expansion of bilateral ties and towards the end of the meeting, the interior minister was extended an invitation to visit Algeria, which he accepted.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohtashemi was due to visit Algiers a few months back but postponed the visit because of the recent unrest which rocked Algeria.

Paper Assesses Israeli-Palestinian Situation

LD2812200288 Tehran IRNA in English 1905 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 28, IRNA—The Persian daily JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said in its editorial Wednesday that the Israelites expect further set-backs by PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat, and warned the Palestinians that in the event the current submissive behaviour of Palestinian leaders to the Zionists should continue, in the near future the Palestinians are likely to be killed in the city streets with the same guns and bullets which they have procured for fighting the Zionist government.

The following is excerpts from the commentary.

"The plight of the Palestinians is becoming worse nowadays as a result of the selling of the Palestinian cause by submissive personalities and the front of reactionary Arabs. The said personalities who previously were not united in the struggle against Israel and who postponed everything to the future have now ganged up together in pressuring the Palestinian Muslims into conciliation with the Zionists.

"What is happening in the political scene today in relation with Palestine is extremely agonizing to Muslim peoples. They see that even the leaders of the Palestinian movement have joined cause with the sellers of the Palestinian cause and that they seem to be in such a hurry for conveying the title deed of Palestine to Israel, and are doing so even with more haste than the Israelites.

"Naturally such submissive and self-abusive behaviour tempts the enemies to devise novel plans.

"News reports from the occupied Palestine say that groups of armed terrorists in the illegal Israeli settlements are about to establish another Jewish state on the West Bank, and firmly establish themselves in the same geographic area with PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat and his group, and become a nuisance to the future Palestinian state. This terrorist group is to publish its declaration of independence in the name of 'Free Judah' and even issue passports for the Jews living within its jurisdiction and have an official flag.

"It is a known fact that such operations have been designed in a bid to make Palestinians pull out from the area in a step by step procedure. The enemy intends to push submissive elements away from the Palestinian lands.

"Although 'Arafat and his group have declared that they have sufficiently withdrawn from their previous position and given concessions to Israel, but according to the dictates of their nature the Israelites as well as all enemies of humanity are in the habit of taking one stride forward for each single set-back by their enemies.

"Israel's proposition of 'Free Judah' is simply a device for making the conciliating groups set back even further than they already have. The stage-show put on by Israel has actors each of whom act according to their status and the role given them.

"Mubarak favors a return to Israel, saying that in this way he means to serve the Palestinians. Simultaneously Cairo suppresses Muslims and arrests every person who is proved to be against the treacherous Camp David accord and Israel.

"The outcries of Palestinians in the occupied land are suppressed, Yasir 'Arafat is pressured to recognize the right of Israel to exist and gives in to the enemies of the Palestinian nation, the people of Lebanon are embroiled in unwarranted internecine conflicts, and finally the proposition 'New Judah' is brought up to demonstrate the fact that renegades have penetrated the Palestinian movement and intend to lead the Palestinian movement to conciliation.

"Enemies of Muslims will naturally try to exploit every opportunity and every weak point in their opponents and they will try to capitalize on the submissiveness of Palestinian leaders, and give them the least concessions, and end the issue of Palestine with the least possible cost.

"The Palestinian people, however, should block the road to the sellers of their cause and they are able to do so. If they do not do it today, it is as much likely that in a near future the Palestinians will be done to death by betrayers of the Palestinian cause and with the guns and bullets which belong to the Palestinian movement."

Reserve Military Service To Be Abolished
LD2912120188 Tehran IRNA in English 1150 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 29, IRNA—Reserve military service will be abolished by the end of the year (21 March'89) it was announced Thursday.

According to the decision approved by acting commander in chief Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, soldiers who have completed their two-year military service will no longer have to stay on another four months as reservists.

"This decision was taken in view of the calm situation in the fronts," the deputy in charge of manpower at the commander in chief's headquarters told IRNA.

The move is the first of its kind since the 20 August ceasefire with Iraq.

The plan also envisages gradual reduction of reserve service for those who will complete normal duty before 21 March.

Those who began compulsory service in the month of Mehr 1365 (23 September'86) will get one month grace from reserve duty and be discharged this month (started 22 December).

Those who started service in Aban of the same year (23 October'86) will also get a month's grace and will be discharged in Bahman (21 January).

Those who began service in Azar (22 November) and Dey 1365 (22 December'86) will go home two months earlier in Bahman (21 January) and Esfand (20 February).

Those who began in Bahman 1365 (21 January'86) will receive three month's grace and be discharged in Esfand (20 February) of that year onwards will not carry out reserve service.

The deputy also said soldiers who have been exempted from warfront duty will now only spend three months as reservists, instead of six months—except those within this category in the Ground Forces of the Army and the IRGC who will remain two months in reserve.

The reserve time for those who are completing military duty outside the military establishment will not change and will remain six months.

Tehran Bazaar Association Issues Statement
NC1512200888 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 10 Dec 88 p 11

[From the Political Department]

[Text] The Islamic Bazaar and Guilds' Association of Tehran has issued its third statement referring to the necessity for all to follow the decrees of the imam and the leader-designate at all levels. The statement pointed out that there are some who profess to follow his eminence the imam and his line 100 percent; they consider others counterrevolutionaries and refer to them as such.

By influencing the minds of the simple and well-intentioned people and youth, they unhesitatingly spread venom in society. They pay no heed to the imam's exhortations to eliminate grudges and individual or collective confrontations. The statement adds:

Following the delineation of all the guidelines for the reconstruction policy by his eminence the imam, the leader-designate, the esteemed president, the Majlis speaker, and the state prosecutor, some writers and the demagogues audaciously adopt the path of opposition to these guidelines, and intentionally or unintentionally they therefore pursue the grand designs of the oppressors and the grouplets who had endeavored to create dissent among the various strata of society after the victory of the revolution by deceptive utterances. They knew that if the country's economy were damaged, the people would become discontented.

Therefore, they attacked the private sector and the people, particularly the Islamic Bazaar. They do not mention the services rendered by this great section of society and merely harp on hoarding and blackmarketeering, which are partly the result of the government's erroneous economic policies and partly due to that segment of the private sector for whom, unfortunately, the judiciary does not follow the required policy. This is even though the Islamic Bazaar and Guilds Association of Tehran had repeatedly requested that the evil of these people, who are like leeches, be removed from the leadership of the nation and the Islamic Bazaar.

Instead of uniting together to remove the scourge of these hoarders and wealth-accumulators, once again insults and accusations are being flung from such people from all directions at the private sector, one of the three economic sectors of the country.

For example, Mr Aba'i said in his speech at the law college on assessing the Charter of Brotherhood: "I have no information on economic affairs." He contradicts the clear viewpoint of the imam who said that trade should be in the hands of the people by comparing the private sector to the infidel Saddam and the present policy to Resolution No 598—that wants to show the world that Saddam is a liar.

He even attacks those who are regularly praying and fasting, and he harps on two parties and a brotherhood [not further identified]. A glance at the pre-agenda speeches of some Majlis deputies following the exhortations of the imam and other revered people reveals how they flout these exhortations. One of them even violated the oath he took for safeguarding the Constitution when he said: "The private sector is a disaster for the revolution." Another said: The ability of the private sector is 20 times more than that of the government.

Another deputy said on one occasion that the private sector of Iran "is the dirtiest in the world." He says that nearly 3,000 wholesale dealers in Tehran possess trading cards, and their annual income is twice as much as the war expenditure. What is the benefit in such remarks? Are they for the purpose of weakening the great leadership, the leader-designate, and the esteemed officials, and for creating doubt and discord among the people?

Concluding its third statement, the Islamic Bazaar and Guilds Association of Tehran calls on everyone to abide by the views of his eminence the imam in order to maintain the spirit of brotherhood and advises all such people and all writers to coordinate their work within the guidelines of his eminence the imam as soon as possible and—now that the people have realized that the actual reason for the present economic chaos is the slogans, policies, and views of such individuals—also to assess the situation and assist in seeing that the work is performed by the people and under government supervision.

Paper Claims Public Has 'Lost Trust' in Media

LD2412182588 Tehran IRNA in English 1628 GMT 24 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 24 IRNA—News organizations have not been able to provide news properly and on time to gain public confidence and thus have created the right atmosphere for a stonger "rumour culture".

The daily KEYHAN in an article Saturday said people were more inclined to believe what relatives and friends said, even if they were wrong, than what the papers or the radio and television said.

"Even if the culture of making rumours and accepting all forms of them was not as strong as it is, rumours would still spread several times faster than "official news"," it said.

The reason was because "unfortunately our mass media have not and are not able to answer the informational demands of the society at this crucial juncture."

The paper took the opportunity to criticize the state of news gathering after rumours swept Tehran that a school bus carrying girl students had been hijacked. The Police Department issued a strong denial but several days later. It said the public rumour mill and foreign radio stations were filling the people's thirst for information while "regrettably, some sections of the society have lost trust in the official news distribution channels."

"If the pages of our newspapers and publications and our radio and television waves were organized in such a way to provide news on time and with a correct analysis of the current issues—of course without taking sides—they would then attract public attention and increase public confidence and trust (towards the mass media)."

Mohtashemi on Article 100 Committees' Work

LD1512161188 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpts] As the Article 100 Committees [originally set up to deal with economic corruption] resumed their work today, the interior minister stressed the need for the country's mayors to observe the norms of ethics and principles. He said: The Article 100 Committees must not be regarded as the means to providing the municipalities with their livelihood and budget.

After a lapse of 4 years the Article 100 Committees resumed their work today amid ceremonies in the presence of Interior Minister Mohtashemi.

We are now going to ask Mr Mohtashemi how can revival of the Article 100 Committees solve the difficulties which face the municipalities and how can it help the deprived people?

[Begin Mohtashemi recording] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. I hope that with the beginning of the work of the Article 100 Committees, the people will see the removal of the backlog of unattended files, and that the backlog of work will be speedily attended to. [passage omitted]

As far as possible the amounts to be levied as fines [on shopkeepers guilty of overcharging] must be the minimum. However, with regard to those who are intent on accumulating wealth and engaging in large-scale wheeler-dealing, we will impose maximum fines. [passage omitted]

We hope our policy of fighting profiteers will benefit all the people and preserve their rights. [end recording]

Railroad Bridge Construction Project Detailed

LD2512102788 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 25 Dec 88

[Excerpts] In an interview with IRNA, the managing director of the installation unit of the Arak Machinery Manufacturing Plant said with regard to the project on the construction of the Bafq-Bandar-e 'Abbas metal railway bridge: The bridge, which was built thanks to the efforts of the workers and experts of this factory, is 800 miles long and weighs 4,000 tons. The project was

implemented on the basis of an agreement between the Roads and Transport Ministry and the Arak Machinery Manufacturing Plant in 1984-5 at a cost of 1 billion rials.

He added: The Bafq-Bandar-e 'Abbas bridge has two sections. The installation of the first section, which is 360 miles long, has been completed. The installation of another section, which is 440 miles long, situated 3 km away, will be completed in the first half of next year.

He said: Two passenger or cargo trains could travel over the bridge with maximum loads and at 120 km per hour in opposite directions. Because of its curvature and longitudinal and transverse gradients and its method of installation it is unique in the Middle East. [passage omitted]

He referred to important projects being implemented by the factory. He said: For the first time in the country, an agreement was signed this year between the Defense Industries Organization and the Arak Machinery Manufacturing Plant for the manufacture and installation of Boeing-747 hangars, at a cost of about 2.4 billion rials. The project, which is unique in the Middle East, will be completed in 18 months. It will be used for repairs on large aircraft.

He added: Before the revolution, the U.S. company Lockheed was to implement this project, all the raw material requirements of which had been imported from the United States.

He then called the construction and installation of the Shahid Raja'i power plant cooling tower, which is 220 miles high and weighs 40,800 tons, another important project being implemented by the factory. He said: An agreement worth 1.75 billion rials and $3 million in foreign currency was signed between the (Tavanir) company and the Arak Machinery Manufacturing Plant last year. [passage omitted]

Iraqi Kurdish Party Leader on 'Antiregime' Front

LD1612100688 Tehran in English to Europe 1930 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The leader of the Democratic Party of Iraqi Kurdistan, Ma'sud Barzani, said in an interview with the correspondent of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC NEWS AGENCY in Damascus today that his party had drawn significant plans for a systematic struggle against the regime of Saddam [Husayn].

Mr Barzani stressed that those plans will be executed by a united front of all Iraqi antiregime forces due to be formed shortly and would act as a headquarters to conduct the operations of Iraqi strugglers.

The Syrian officials have also shown their support for the formation of the united front, he said.

Regarding the future relations of the united front with Iran and Syria, Mr Barzani noted that as both Iran and Syria support the Iraqi nation's struggles against the regime of Iraq, a spiritual link will best be maintained between Iraqi strugglers and those two countries.

The leader of the Democratic Party of Iraqi Kurdistan added that the Iraqi regime's deployment of chemical weapons against the Kurdish strugglers of that country stems from the regime's weakness vis-a-vis the Iraqi Kurdish combatants.

Concerning Saddam's declaration of a general amnesty he pointed out that it is in fact Saddam himself who should ask to be forgiven by the Iraqi nation as he has committed many crimes against the people of Iraq, especially the Kurds.

He concluded: Why should the Kurds in Iraq be granted amnesty by Saddam when they have committed no crime other than struggle to realize their just rights?

Tudeh Party First Secretary Interviewed

LD2812150588 (Clandestine) Radio of the Iranian Toilers in Persian 1530 GMT 27 Dec 88

[Interview with 'Ali Khavari, first secretary of the Tudeh Party of Iran, by unidentified correspondent; date and place not given—read by announcer]

[Text] Question: We have received several various reports from Iran in connection with the mass execution of political prisoners. What is your opinion about this?

Khavari: The violent disregard for human rights, for instance the mass execution of political prisoners without trial, is a bitter reality. We have appropriately termed these executions a national tragedy. The executions apply to all political forces opposing the regime and even some internal opposition, including some clerics. The news which reaches us from the families of political prisoners tells us that the number of people executed so far is in the thousands.

Members of the Tudeh Party, the Feda'i-ye Khalq, and the Mojahedin-e Khalq are the main victims of this shameless wave of homicide. In the past, in particular during the last 6 months, we have repeatedly issued warnings. The reasons for our warnings and our sense of danger became clear, particularly when the visiting rights of the families of political prisoners were halted last summer. After months of no news about the well-being of the prisoners, prison officials began delivering the prisoners' clothes and personal belongings to their families.

According to the latest reports, thousands of Tudeh Party members, including some high-ranking Central Committee members, have been executed. Most of these prisoners had to trail, or they were not sentenced to death but were merely serving out their prison sentences.

The executed political prisoners include people aged 80 to 85 years. Some of our comrades had spent more than 30 years in prisons of the two regimes of the shah and the Islamic Republic.

Question: In your opinion, what are the reasons for the mass execution of political prisoners?

Khavari: The reasons for the executions and the worsening human rights in Iran, in brief, can be attributed to the current political crisis of the regime of the Islamic Republic and its inability to continue its rule. There are several reasons for the regime's political crisis. The real roots of the current crisis are the regime's disregard for the objectives of the Bahman revolution [in February 1979] and the regime's lack of respect for popular demands during the last 10 years.

In particular, the policy to continue the war against Iraq has isolated and discredited the Islamic Republic among the people. The isolation reached such a degree that the Islamic regime finally had to succumb to the people's desire for peace. This was a great victory achieved by the people and peace-loving groups and organizations, a victory which the regime could not stand to see.

After the subsequent intensification of internal differences within the regime after the end of the war, and also the subsequent rising dissatisfaction among the people and their struggle for their social demands, the political crisis of the regime deepened even more.

Amid all of this, the Tudeh Party's program for all socio-economic areas came into focus and our party's slogans were widely taken up by the various sections of the population. The regime could not stand this situation either.

At the same time, the regime adopted a policy of rapprochement with the imperialists in order to save itself from the crisis. In order to pave the way for closer relations with the imperialists, the steadfast anti-imperialist forces, in particular the Tudeh Party, had to be eradicated. These were the main reasons for the new wave of execution of political prisoners in Iran.

Question: What has been the reaction of political organisations opposing the regime, in particular the Tudeh Party, to these executions?

Khavari: Currently, a powerful wave of protest against the execution of politial prisoners has spread all over Iran and throughout the world. The families of political prisoners and activists of political organizations inside and outside Iran have been involved in informing public opinion about the regime's atrocities. All concerned people in the world have been urged to take action. Our party has not ceased its struggle to save the lives of political prisoners even for a single moment.

Some of our efforts in this respect include sending letters and documents to the UN secretary general and to the Human Rights Commission, divulging the nature of atrocities committee by the regime within the prisoners, and the mobilization of public opinion in Iran and in the world to save the lives of political prisoners. During the last few days, our party's supporters have staged hunger strikes and other forms of protests in various parts of the world.

We believe that only unity and solidarity among the progressive groups can stop the butchers of the regime. We, on our part, declare our total readiness to take action toward bringing about such unity.

Bhutan

Recognition of Palestinian State Declared

JN2812211088 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1926 GMT 28 Dec 88

["Text" of cable from King Jigme Singye Wangchuck to PLO chief Yasir 'Arafat—date not given]

[Text] His Excellency Mr Yasir 'Arafat, in my own name and on behalf of the Government and people of Bhutan, we welcome the declaration of the independent Palestinian state. As a member of the Nonaligned Movement and in view of our constant support for the Palestinian people, it gives me pleasure to communicate to you Bhutan's recognition of the State of Palestine.

[Signed] The King of Bhutan

Pakistan

Supreme Court To Hear Baluchistan Petition 7 Jan

BK2812153688 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 28 Dec 88

[Text] The Supreme Court has agreed to a hearing for the petition filed by Mr Mohammad Anwar Durrani against the dissolution of the Baluchistan Assembly. The full bench of the Supreme Court will hear the petition on the 7th of next month.

The petitioner has filed a motion with the court that the federation be directed not to announce the provincial election schedule until the decision on the petition is made.

The Supreme Court has also set the 7th of next month as the date for hearing a similar petition filed by Mr Enayatullah Khan Bazi against the dissolution of Baluchistan Assembly by the provincial governor.

Baluchistan Election Announcement Postponed
BK2912041288 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] It has been officially announced in Quetta that the election schedule for Baluchistan assembly, to be announced today, has been postponed. A notice issued last night says in view of the two petitions submitted to the Supreme Court, the acting chief minister of Baluchistan, retired Justice Mir Khuda Bux Marri, has decided to postpone the announcement of the election schedule.

The Supreme Court will hear the petitions in Karachi on 7 January. The notice says the decision to postpone the election schedule has been taken after talks with Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan [Pakistan Democratic Party] and Maulana Fazlur Rahman [Jamiyat-i Ulema-i Pakistan].

The acting chief minister has reiterated that in the face of the verdict of the Supreme Court, the elections will be held within 90 days according to the constitutional provisions.

2 Killed, 2 Injured in Explosion in Baluchistan
BK2912030788 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 29 Dec 88

[Text] According to APP [Associated Press of Pakistan] two persons were killed and two injured in an explosion in the (Kimiofozai) area, about 5 miles away from Zhob in Baluchistan yesterday.